

# The Nation and The Athenæum

THE NATION. VOL. XXXVI., No. 20.] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1925. [THE ATHENÆUM. No. 4946.

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE security issue continues to dominate Press discussion in France, and it is significant that M. Paul Boncour, the leader of the French Socialists on whose benevolent neutrality the Herriot Government depends, has declared himself in favour of the Herriot-Poincaré thesis of France's right to remain on the Rhine pending an international guarantee of her security, such as the Geneva Protocol provides, or such as would be provided by a full military alliance, also covering apparently Czechoslovakia and Poland, with this country.

"Who would be so mad," says M. Boncour in an article in the "Œuvre" of February 6th, "as to let go of the provisional safeguards which we possess from the Treaty texts, that must be interpreted freely and in accordance with the necessities of life, of which necessities the first is that of self-defence?"

"France," he concludes, "will stand waiting on the Rhine bridges until this international control is established and the pact of guarantee is functioning."

Other utterances in the Radical Press are in similar terms. This line of approach to the Geneva Protocol on the part of responsible representatives of the French Left is profoundly to be regretted. It in no way furthers the progress of the Protocol in this country. Indeed, its unfortunate suggestion of the method of blackmail is calculated to add seriously to the obstacles which already block the road to acceptance of the Geneva scheme. As for the apparent calculation that, failing the Protocol, a military alliance at variance with our practical interests and our moral sense can be extorted by such means as these, no error could be more profound, or more likely at a later remove to exacerbate relations between England and France.

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The British Government has issued an explicit disclaimer, in the form of a semi-official communication to the Press, of any intention to link up the evacuation question with the general issues of security or Allied debts.

"It is clearly understood," says the inspired intimation, "and at the present moment it is apparently necessary, in view of a variety of Continental comments, to point out once again that the British Government,

in postponing the evacuation of Cologne, was actuated by motives of a purely legal order. There is every reason to believe that Germany has not carried out her obligations under the disarmament clauses of the Treaty. On this ground, and on this ground alone, the evacuation of Cologne has been postponed until the delinquencies in respect of the disarmament clauses are made good. In the view of the British Government this is the sole issue, and the question of the evacuation of Cologne cannot be linked up with any other questions than this. It has, for instance, no practical connection with the general issues of security or inter-Allied debts."

This statement should provide valuable support for the German Chancellor in his determination to secure compliance by the German military with the Disarmament demands of the Allies, as also in his contention, voiced this week in a speech at Cologne, that Germany can never admit the legitimacy of attempts to make evacuation of the Northern Zone conditional on the prior securing by France of a special security pact. The British statement should do much to clear the air and to remove a number of mischievous misconceptions, especially as the previous handling of the outstanding questions of the day: disarmament, evacuation, and debts, has been such as inevitably to lend colour to the inferences now disclaimed.

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Mr. Churchill's Note on the French Debt, while it reaffirms "the principle of the Balfour Note," is probably designed to open a way of escape from that principle. The Balfour Note insists that Great Britain shall receive from Europe payments equivalent to those she is making to America. This means in practice, as Mr. Keynes has pointed out in our columns, that "the less Germany pays, the more France shall pay;—that is to say, the less France is in a position to pay, the more she shall pay." Mr. Churchill now suggests that

"it might be found convenient that French payments should be divided into:—

(a) Fixed annual amounts to be paid by France irrespective of the actual receipts from the Dawes annuities in a particular year; and

(b) A further annual charge on the French share in the Dawes annuities."

This proposal, if it stood alone, might form the basis of a settlement, but it can only be squared with the

principle of the Balfour Note by the corollary that if the (b) payments decline, the (a) payments must either increase or be continued for a longer period. We are thus thrown back upon the absurdity that the less France is in a position to pay, the more she shall be called upon to pay. We can only hope that Mr. Churchill's intention is to slide imperceptibly out of this elaborate folly.

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The Government face the new Session which has just opened with a huge majority but an uncertain programme. It has yet to be seen with what appetite the Tory Free Traders will swallow the new "safeguarding" scheme, or how far the Government will allow itself to be pushed by the extreme Protectionist wing. A definite decision on the proposed Agricultural Conference has still to be announced; but without the co-operation of Labour it can do nothing effective. The estimates are understood to be still under discussion between the Departments and the Treasury, and it will be interesting to see how far Mr. Churchill's desire for a popular Budget outweighs his natural sympathy with naval and military demands, and whether the Ministers for Health, Labour, and Education are strong enough to maintain the requirements of the social services. Housing and unemployment will both be to the fore, and if the Government have a policy on either, it will be awaited with interest. Rent-control is, apparently, to be continued on the present lines for another two years. As regards private members' Bills, the main interest will centre round the avowed intention of the more reactionary Tories to attack the Trade Union levy for political purposes. One thing is clear; in this Parliament, where the Government have an automatic majority altogether out of proportion to their strength in the country, the real appeal of the debates is to public opinion outside Parliament, and constructive criticism from the Liberal benches may exert an influence wholly out of proportion to the voting power of the party in the House.

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Mr. Bridgeman's speech at Burnley on the Government's naval policy is singularly disturbing in its revelation of Tory mentality. Mr. Bridgeman assured his audience that the Government's first idea was to preserve international peace, and "in keeping up an efficient Navy the Government was effecting a stroke more calculated to ensure the peace of the world than anything else that it could do." It would be interesting to know exactly what Mr. Bridgeman thinks he means. We certainly do not believe that the road to permanent peace lies through unilateral disarmament, and so long as war remains a possible contingency, it is necessary that the national defences should be maintained in a state of efficiency; but if history teaches anything, it teaches that armaments by themselves do not prevent war. If the maintenance of naval strength is really the most effective contribution the present Government can make to a world that is looking eagerly for a lead in the direction of armament limitation and international co-operation, they proclaim their own political bankruptcy and doom the world to a new period of unrestricted armament competition between nations each anxious to preserve peace by preparation for war.

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Unfortunately, Mr. Bridgeman went further, and indicated that what he means by efficiency is—Singapore. He scouted the idea of antagonism to Japan, and believes that "Japan would be the companion of Great Britain in peace for all time." The fact remains that the Singapore scheme has been openly advocated, in Parliament and out of it, on the express ground of its

necessity in the event of war with Japan, and that there is no conceivable contingency, except war with Japan, in which a *capital ship* base at Singapore would be of any earthly use. We are sure the Government have no aggressive intention; but it is precisely this determination to provide against remote and unlikely contingencies that sets up the most dangerous form of armament competition. The Japanese official attitude has been scrupulously correct; but so moderate and influential a paper as the "Jiji-Shimpo" leaves no doubt as to the real alarm felt in the country. As the "Jiji-Shimpo" rightly points out, both the scheme itself and the manner in which it has been advocated indicate a distrust of the long-established tradition of Anglo-Japanese friendship, which threatens seriously to cloud the atmosphere in the Pacific.

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In his carefully guarded statement with regard to the expulsion of the Œcumenical Patriarch, Lord Curzon confirms the impression we expressed last week as to the real motives of the Turkish Government, for he states that, during the negotiations at Lausanne, it became apparent that they "were anxious to get rid of the Patriarch, and also to get rid of the institution." He has, however, added a good deal to our knowledge by showing that the Synod elected the present Patriarch after the Turkish Government had warned them that he was an "exchangeable Greek." Whether the Turks are right or wise in insisting on his expulsion is another matter; it is certainly unfortunate that they have refused either to discuss the matter further with the Greeks, or to allow it to be referred to the League of Nations or the International Court. Lord Curzon implied that the British Government were anxious to see the matter brought before the League; but the present Turkish Government is not easy to influence. Too much has been made of the appointment as interpreters to the Mosul Commission of two men previously expelled from Iraq; but the appointments were, at least, unsuitable, and there seems to be a strong tendency among Turkish statesmen to do needlessly provocative things, in order to get the applause of the Angora Assembly for their "independent attitude."

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The Canadian Government has apparently committed itself to open war with the North Atlantic Shipping Conference, whom it accuses of discriminating against Canadian ports and hampering trade by excessive freight charges and concerted restriction of services. The King's Speech refers to steps to be taken "to afford the Government of Canada control over ocean rates." It is understood that the intention is to subsidize competition, and to promise equivalent subsidies to any line which will agree to permit its rates to be fixed by the Canadian Government. This looks very like an attempt to provide subsidized services for Canadian products at uneconomic rates, and in view of Canadian experience in connection with the Canadian State services and the attempt to control freights on the Great Lakes, strong opposition is anticipated in Canada itself. It seems rather strange that a preliminary attempt has not been made to remedy the alleged grievances through the Imperial Shipping Committee, who have been remarkably successful in mediating between ship-owners and shippers, and who, last year, obtained considerable concessions for Canadian shippers. In view of the present position of British shipping, the prospect of a subsidized rate-war in the Atlantic is disconcerting, and a definite statement of the Canadian Government's proposals will be awaited with some anxiety.



One of the most surprising features of the American elections was the apparent indifference of the voters to the recent scandals at Washington. Only a firm belief, one imagines, in its new chief's integrity and strength of character can have induced the American people to give a further lease of power to a party whose administration of public affairs had been sullied by such gross corruption in high places. But, although the misdeeds of the "Ohio gang" may no longer count for anything politically, the law courts are just beginning to take notice of them. This week a Federal Court at Chicago has imposed a sentence of two years' imprisonment, with a fine of \$10,000, on the notorious Col. Charles R. Forbes, the former head of the Veterans' Bureau, for conspiracy to defraud the Government. To those who are familiar with the almost incredible story of the Bureau this will seem a mild retribution indeed. It has been estimated that during the two years Col. Forbes was in office no less than \$225,000,000 went annually in "graft" and waste. A typical item was the expenditure of \$70,000 on floor wax and floor cleaner for the veterans' hospitals—about enough to last a hundred years. Forbes paid 98 cents a gallon for the cleaner, which, according to expert testimony, was worth 3.2 cents a gallon. The next criminal prosecutions of the series will presumably be concerned with the scarcely less discreditable Teapot Dome affair.

The Swarajists' plans are still uncertain, but it does not seem likely that they will come to close quarters with the bureaucracy this year. There will be plenty of skirmishing, and spectacular sideshows may be arranged to interest the onlookers and to stimulate an aggressive spirit in the rank and file. But apart from a mutiny there are only two forces in India which might conceivably break through the bureaucratic lines. One is "mass civil disobedience," in other words, a general refusal to pay the land tax. The other is a Nationalist Ministry in a Provincial Government, supported by a Nationalist majority in the Provincial Council. Except perhaps Mr. Gandhi, no Indian politician ever had the power to start the ryot withholding his land tax, and Mr. Gandhi's hour is past. As to the Ministry, election pledges still hinder the Swarajists from accepting office. But many advanced Nationalists now begin to see the advantage of securing a foothold within the bureaucracy's entrenchments. Their newspapers are urging the Swarajists to promise support to an "independent" Nationalist Ministry on condition that the "independent" Ministers recognize their dependence on Swarajist votes. The party would thus attain to power without responsibility. Unfriendly critics insist that from time immemorial this has been the goal of the Indian politician. However that may be, the precedent of a puppet Ministry seems hardly conducive to a healthy development of the Indian constitution.

No one can look with much enthusiasm on the results of the Opium Conferences at last drifting to a close at Geneva. The Americans and Chinese have withdrawn altogether, the former partly because they were represented by a singularly inelastic delegate in Mr. Stephen Porter, the latter for no reason that has been clearly explained. The appointment of Lord Cecil as British delegate alone saved the Conference from complete breakdown. Under instructions from the Cabinet, Lord Cecil has contended that since British dependencies are impotent to check the smuggling of opium, it is useless for them to attempt to abolish smoking till China and other countries from which the illicit opium comes have got a hold of their own growers and cease to be a source of illegal supply. Within fifteen years from

that wholly problematic date Great Britain, France, and Holland will stop all smoking in their colonies. An agreement on these lines has now been signed, and the old convention drafted in December by the First Conference on a few subsidiary aspects of the smoking problem is apparently to be accepted after all. In addition, and more important than either of the other two, a further convention has been accepted in principle creating the nucleus, at any rate, of machinery for the control of export and import and manufacture of opium-derivatives like morphia and heroin. If that can be made a reality it may compensate in some small measure for the failure of the Conferences to do anything at all to limit production or anything effective to reduce smoking. The British Government will no doubt claim that it went as far as circumstances permitted, but its fight against circumstances can hardly be regarded as inspiring.

The Yugoslav elections, which were held last Sunday, passed off without many untoward incidents and with considerably less excitement than had been anticipated. It is stated that the poll was free, and that no pressure was brought to bear on the electors by the authorities. The result of the poll is that M. Pasitch's Radicals and their allies the Independent Democrats of M. Pribitchevitch have secured a clear majority of 11 over the aggregate strength of the Opposition Bloc, i.e., the Democrats, Croat Republicans, Slovene Clericals, Bosnian Mussulmans, and the various small and intermediate groups. It is too early to gauge the full effect of this result. One or two things may, however, be taken for granted. The clear-cut decision at the poll will at least mean continuity of administration and the economic development of Yugoslavia without interruptions in the form of recurrent Ministerial crises. It will also mean the continuation of the foreign policy initiated by Dr. Nintchitch, which includes friendly relations with Italy and the inauguration of better relations between Belgrade and Sofia. With regard to internal politics, it is not too much to hope that greater moderation will be exercised by all the parties now that they at least know exactly where they stand. The recent months of uncertainty and mutual apprehension were not conducive to the finding of a *modus vivendi* on delicate questions.

The position in regard to wages in the railway service is not as straightforward and simple as it appears. The companies seem to be playing the difficult but sometimes highly successful game of exciting divisions and mutual discontent between the three big unions concerned. Thus at the meeting last week they dealt with the two allies, the N.U.R. and the R.C.A., more or less together, and the R.C.A. are by no means pleased, for they found that their own claims, which they consider most moderate, were not considered separately on their merits, but only in conjunction with the admittedly extravagant demands of the N.U.R. Again, in submitting their counterclaim for a reduction, the companies extended this to the locomotive grades, although the A.S.L.E. & F. were not represented at the meeting and have not yet submitted any claim of their own. Since the meeting the R.C.A. have decided to refer their claim to the Wages Board machinery, which will give them a full and independent hearing. The N.U.R., however, have laid down the condition that their whole programme must go to the Board and not merely that part which affects the conciliation grades. If this were agreed the N.U.R. would have scored heavily over the craft unions of engineers in the railway shops. But as it is obvious that this condition cannot be accepted, it is not easy to see why it is put forward, unless the intention is to disregard the special conciliation machinery established by the Railways Act, and to substitute a general inquiry under the Industrial Courts Act.

## THE SAFEGUARDING COMEDY.

"Mr. Baldwin is heavily pledged against Protection, but he has, as he says, 'a mandate for Safeguarding,' which he is determined to use. As applied to any particular industry, Protection and Safeguarding mean, of course, exactly the same thing. The whole distinction, in Mr. Baldwin's mind, turns presumably on the scope of the measure. Mr. Baldwin, that is to say, claims a mandate to protect a few industries, and is pledged not to protect more than a few. His problem is to select the few."—THE NATION, December 27th, 1924.

"The Board of Trade . . . has produced a set of rules of procedure under which industries may be 'safeguarded.' . . . When we see a street-corner acrobat tied up with cords, and watch his ingenuity in extricating himself, our admiration is tempered by the reflection that he need never have got himself tied up at all. . . ."—*"Morning Post,"* February 4th, 1925.

THE Government and the Board of Trade have made a gallant attempt to extricate Mr. Baldwin from his safeguarding dilemma. The task has evidently proved difficult, and in order to accomplish it the project of a new general Act of Parliament, on the lines of the Safeguarding of Industries Act, has been abandoned in favour of a special *ad hoc* Finance Act, or clause in the Budget, to protect each menaced industry. The procedure laid down by the Board of Trade for the sifting of applications for protection under this scheme contains some welcome features. The Board itself and the Treasury retain full responsibility for recommending each new tax to Parliament, and the House of Commons retains the power to reject any such recommendation. It is true that a House with a Protectionist majority is extremely unlikely to reject a protective duty proposed by the Government, but it is important that it should have complete control and responsibility. A general Safeguarding Act might have paved the way to a General Tariff without each Member of Parliament being obliged to justify to his constituents a vote in favour of each individual tax in the schedule. Even Mr. Baldwin himself might have looked helplessly on while the pledges, which, to his honour, he takes so seriously, were violated by a mechanism which had passed beyond his control. These dangers have been avoided by the adoption of the new plan, and Free Traders will welcome the opportunities for effective criticism which that plan provides.

The main problem has not, however, been solved. An elaborate sieve has been constructed to separate those few industries that ought, according to Mr. Baldwin's theory, to be safeguarded from the many that ought not. Unfortunately, the position of one industry which competes with imports is so like that of the others that any sieve will either let through all or none. Some of the conditions laid down by the Board of Trade seem, indeed, to be calculated to discourage applications for protection; but it is not clear that they will discourage one industry more than another. Any duty is, for instance, to be imposed "for a limited period" only, and that period is to be prescribed in the Bill by which it is introduced. This provision would be very salutary if it were taken seriously, for only an industry that was genuinely embarrassed by "exceptional" competition would seek for protection which was certain to be withdrawn at the end of a year or eighteen months. It will not be surprising, however, if, in fact, the temporary character of the relief offered fails to prevent applications from industries which are not in desperate straits. It is far more difficult to resist an application for the renewal of an existing duty than to refrain from imposing new burdens, for the excellent reason that any change in taxation causes a temporary disturbance in industry, and

may lead to hardship. The agitation which accompanied the repeal of the McKenna duties sufficiently illustrates this fact, and may well serve to inspire our manufacturers with a simple faith that if they can once screw a measure of protection out of the Government it will not really be withdrawn until Free Trade has won another victory at the polls. There is, at any rate, reason to believe that, undeterred by the formidable character of the sieve in which they are to be sifted, a number of industries are already preparing applications for protection in accordance with the Board of Trade regulations. It is interesting, therefore, to consider how those regulations are likely to work out.

There is, first, to be an inquiry by the Board itself to decide whether there is a *prima facie* case to go before a Committee. This is probably intended only to weed out frivolous applications, and the Board is so unlikely to turn down any genuine appeal that we may safely pass over this step and come to the Committee stage. A Committee is to consist of not more than five persons appointed by the President of the Board of Trade, and no person "whose interests may be materially affected" is to serve thereon. (If this provision were broadly interpreted, the choice of the President would be severely restricted; no importers or exporters, no bankers or shipowners need apply; even consumers ought logically to be ruled out.) This Committee is to report first as to whether the industry applying for protection is of "substantial importance." One can imagine the outcry which would follow a negative reply on this point, and pass on. Secondly, it is to say whether competing foreign goods are being imported in "abnormal quantities." The answer to this will obviously depend upon what standard of normality is adopted, but it should not be difficult to satisfy a protectionist Committee on this head. Thirdly, the question arises whether these goods are being sold at prices below those at which similar goods can be profitably produced here. An affirmative answer to this inquiry should be forthcoming in every case, as few goods would otherwise be imported. Fourthly, the Committee is asked to say whether "employment is being, or is likely to be, seriously affected." Here, again, it should not be difficult to satisfy a Committee appointed by Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister that employment "is likely to be" seriously affected. The fifth question put to the Committee is a comprehensive one as to whether the foreign competition from which the industry suffers is "unfair." "Unfairness" may arise, according to the Board of Trade, through (a) depreciation of currency operating so as to create an export bounty; (b) subsidies, bounties, &c., or (c) "inferior conditions of employment of labour, whether as respects remuneration or hours of employment." Condition (a) has practically disappeared from the world to-day; (b) would no doubt apply to a few industries only, but practically every industry could get through the sieve on count (c), since this country is still fortunate enough to maintain a relatively high standard of labour conditions. Sixthly, the Committee is to say whether the industry is carried on with "reasonable efficiency and economy"; seventhly, whether a duty would exert a serious adverse effect on employment in any other industry, and eighthly, whether the industry has established a claim to a duty and, if so, at what rate it should be levied. The seventh question should certainly be carefully considered, and the proper answer would no doubt vary according to the nature of the applicant-industry, but for the rest it will be seen that the sieve has been so constructed that if any industry can pass through it,



many others should also have a fair chance of doing so. This was probably inevitable. The Board of Trade has made a desperate search for discriminatory criteria and it has failed to find them. It remains to be seen whether the Government will end by refusing to safeguard any industry, or by safeguarding a great many, or by letting in a few and then stiffening up the regulations and saying in effect, "We can't impose any more protective duties or we shall be verging on a General Tariff, which Mr. Baldwin is pledged to avoid."

One obstacle still remains to be overcome, however, when an industry has run the gauntlet of a Committee and secured a favourable report, before a duty will be recommended to Parliament. The Board of Trade and the Treasury reserve the right to concur in or to differ from the Committee's report. Some people who still regard Mr. Churchill as a staunch champion of Free Trade principles are deriving great comfort from this reservation, on the assumption that if by any mischance a Committee should be so foolish as to favour a protective tax the Treasury will at once step in and veto the proposal. This seems hardly fair to the Chancellor, who is not so firmly established in the Conservative Party as to be able to weather the storm which would rage if an industry which had established its case before a Committee were thus deprived of its reward. No, if Mr. Churchill is anxious to avoid a crop of protective duties, he must, we think, enlist the sympathy of Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, and see to it that the Board of Trade Committees are manned by sound Free Traders who will give due weight to such words as "abnormal" and "exceptional" in their terms of reference. Even so, the Government may have difficulty with its protectionist followers.

Liberal economists may be forgiven for watching with some amusement these floundering attempts to find a policy reconciling the ineradicable predilections of the Tories with their pledges at the last election. It must not, however, be forgotten that there is a serious side to the affair. It would be a miserable thing to see the leaders of British industries expending their energy, their brains, and their money upon an effort to get help from the Government which they do not really require. To start them upon that wretched pursuit and to subject the House of Commons to the corrupting influence of lobbying tariff-mongers would be nothing less than a crime against the commonwealth.

#### FRANCE AND THE VATICAN.

RECENT debates in the French Chamber have shown that the religious question in France may, at any moment, become a major political issue. M. Herriot's declared policy is to liquidate relations with the Vatican. M. Briand, the chief artificer of the law of separation, upholds the policy of retaining diplomatic representation, and M. Herriot himself has admitted, under pressure, that questions arising out of the status of the Church in Alsace-Lorraine make it necessary to maintain some sort of accredited agent to the Holy See. It is clear that the Parliamentary Opposition are prepared to raise the religious issue whenever they see a chance of embarrassing the Government by so doing, and that M. Herriot is sufficiently alarmed to recognize the desirability of hedging.

The experience of M. Poincaré showed how easily the fall of a French Government may be brought about by dexterous tactics applied to domestic questions that

seemed to excite little popular interest. It is worth while, therefore, to make such brief examination of the relations between Church and State in France as will reveal the possibilities of the present controversy.

Throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century those relations were regulated by the Concordat of 1801, which gave the Church, subject to a definite assertion of the supremacy of the civil power, much the same *de facto* position as it enjoyed under the Bourbons. The French Government was to nominate Bishops; the Pope to appoint them. All clerics were to swear fidelity to the State, and the State was to fix their salaries. All ecclesiastical property acquired by private persons during the Revolution was to remain in their hands; but the Church was tacitly permitted to recover property sequestered but not privately acquired. Thus the Church recovered its churches, seminaries, and colleges, and a great part of its patrimony, and during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, more particularly under the Second Empire, it increased its wealth and greatly extended its influence, especially in public education.

The quarrel which subsequently arose between the Church and the Third Republic was due mainly to two causes. In the first place, the known sympathies of the clergy during the Boulangist crisis, the Dreyfus affair, and many other political controversies, provoked a well-founded suspicion of their educational activities, as an instrument of political propaganda. Of still greater basic importance was the spread of rationalism and agnosticism in all classes of the French people, and the general conviction that a Church inspired by the traditions of royal France could not properly exist as a State institution under republican government.

This, at all events, was the inspiring principle of the laicizing legislation introduced under MM. Jules Ferry and Grévy. By successive measures the clergy and the monastic orders were deprived of all their positions in the administration of schools, hospitals, and charitable foundations; but it was not until 1904 that the long-smouldering quarrel was brought to a head. In that year Pope Pius X. chose to interpret the visit of President Loubet to the King of Italy as a recognition by the head of a Catholic country of the abolition of the temporal power, and entered a formal protest. He followed this up by ordering two French Bishops to proceed to Rome to answer certain charges that had been brought against them. As he did not actually deprive them of their sees, he was probably within his technical rights under the Concordat; but by communicating with them direct, he was violating the first article of the organic law of 18 Germinal, which gave effect to that instrument, and thus put the two Bishops in a position of direct conflict between the orders of their ecclesiastical superior and the municipal law of their own country.

The French Government at once took up the challenge, withdrew the French representative from the Vatican, and introduced a law disestablishing the Church. This law, which passed in December, 1905, laid down two definite principles: (1) "La république assure la liberté de conscience. Elle garantit le libre exercice des cultes." (2) "La république ne reconnaît, ne salarie, ni ne subventionne aucun culte." In conformity with this principle, an inventory was to be made of all Church goods; all property coming from the State and not applied to a pious foundation created subsequently to 1801 was to return to the State; all other Church property, movable and immovable, was to be transferred to "associations cultuelles," to be created under a previous law passed in 1901 for the purpose of assimilating

ing the obligations and civil responsibilities of collegiate bodies to those of private individuals. All churches were to become the property of the departments or communes in which they were situated, but their free use was to be granted to these associations.

The French Bishops bowed to the storm, and, in May, 1906, agreed unanimously to transform the old parish and vestry councils into "associations culturelles"; but on August 14th the Pope intervened by issuing the encyclical "Gravissimo," which forbade the French clergy to create any kind of association intended to comply with the French law which, in the words of a previous encyclical, "gave the administration and custody of the Roman Catholic religion, not to the hierarchic body divinely instituted for these purposes by our Lord, but to an association of laymen." The clergy of France, and such monastic establishments as had survived previous republican legislation, obeyed implicitly, with the result that all their private patrimony and their pension funds, amounting to some 400,000,000 francs, passed into the hands of the State. No association "apte à faire les actes de la vie civile" was there to receive it. Special legislation was passed by M. Briand to allow the clergy to use the churches. As they were now communal and departmental property, the local councils undertook to keep them repaired; but from that day to this the French clergy have lived on the voluntary subscriptions known as "les deniers du culte," on their fees for burials, baptisms, and marriages, and on the work of their own hands.

The result of the separation law has been to give the Pope a power over the French priesthood which the most violent Ultramontane would hardly have claimed for him. No body of men has ever accepted financial ruin with greater cheerfulness. They were well aware that Pius X. asked no more of them than he would have asked of himself. In the words of M. Combes, "his obstinacy is not that of a man: it is the obstinacy of a doctrine," and they not only obeyed but admired him.

Further (and this touches the present problem), the clergy's courageous acceptance of conditions often involving real hardship gained them a measure of sympathy from many moderate men with no clerical bias. Then came the war, and it is beyond question that, during the war, the French clergy greatly increased their popularity and moral authority. In the big cosmopolitan towns the influence of the Church is weak; it is strong in many of the provinces, notably in Brittany, in the South, and in Alsace-Lorraine. Moreover, large sections of French opinion, not greatly influenced by religious feeling, are well disposed to the parish priest and would gladly see his position made easier.

Herein lies the importance of the Vatican controversy. In May, 1921, M. Briand appointed, for the first time since 1904, a diplomatic representative to the Vatican, and after negotiations with this representative—M. Jonnart—the present Pope agreed that certain "associations diocésaines," which fulfil some, though not all of the French requirements, could be formed without violating the canon law. It can thus be argued with great force that the proposed withdrawal of representation will remove the only hope of arriving at a satisfactory compromise, and that its continuance offers at least a fair chance of ending a regrettable situation.

For the Church, as such, no political party, except the extreme Right, cares anything; but there is little doubt that M. Poincaré and the National bloc would be ready to use the religious question as a weapon, and M. Briand has already shown himself ready to fish in the troubled waters. Any appearance of intolerance on

the part of the Government might easily prepare the ground for a very effective political propaganda in the provinces.

Further, two new issues have arisen which give the question of representation real urgency. In the first place, there is the French mandate in Syria, where the Church has extensive property and large establishments, for the protection of which France becomes responsible. In the second place, the clergy in Alsace-Lorraine possess a patrimony to which the terms of the separation law might be applied, and administer their property through associations which comply with the French law. This disparity of rights may not long be tolerated by the French Government; but it will not be easy to introduce uniformity, except as part of a general settlement.

However strongly we may sympathize with M. Herriot's desire to exclude the interference of the Curia in domestic affairs, and to remove all possibility of undue clerical influence in French politics, it seems that he has more to lose than to gain by breaking off relations with the Holy See. A realist policy would admit the danger of internal dissensions inherent in the present position, and seek to preserve the machinery of negotiation, with a view to cutting the ground from under the feet of his opponents. His raising of the stale cry of "pro-Germanism" against the Papacy suggests that he has no great confidence in the logical foundations of his present attitude.

## ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND. WIRELESS.

A SCRUPULOUS record of what I have seen and heard and felt is what I have aimed at making these articles. But whatever pains I take, however I may rewrite—and after a lifetime of writing I have to own humbly that every one of these articles has been rewritten at least once—the difficulty of being quite fair, quite clear, and quite convincing within the necessary limits of two columns is always present to me. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth can be commanded, I find, by the ancient method only. It must be "line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little, with stammering lips." In due time, I trust, some truth may emerge.

What I never cease to marvel at is the satisfied certainty with which not only people of—shall I say?—the week-ending classes, but variously shaded, well-intentioned, and in their way studious politicians and assiduous "rural workers" express themselves with regard to country life and village people. How are these energetic, confident well-wishers of the rural population to be persuaded that it is possible to be close to the facts and pass them by, to be within sight of the facts and fail to grasp them? I who live in a hamlet am baffled and perplexed, even distressed and humiliated at times, in my efforts to seize upon its psychology, and hardly know just what to say positively about our future and how we can best be aided. How shall the stranger understand, or prepare himself or herself to understand?

If there is one thing that looks true about our conditions here it is that they persist. Here are, apparently, endurance, conservatism, resistance, dullness, quiescence, acquiescence, choose the word you will. Here are unaltered, undeviating, confirmed, rooted, settled, inveterate, insusceptible, stuck-fast things.

Yet, in reality, all is changing, and changing very rapidly indeed.



I have tried to show how forlorn, how forgotten of man and the nation our hamlet seems to be—all but the school, which takes on at times almost a miraculous appearance. I have tried to give you a sight of us with our shamed background, the noble architecture of the church. Here are our farm buildings, which are a tinkered makeshift; our cottages, which are a sorrow to gaze on; our huddle of men and women, who are the spiritless, shrunk leavings of the railway and police services and of the adventurous spirit. I had staying with me three months ago a man whose name is known all over England for a countryman who has worked at rural problems. He said he was "depressed" by what he saw.

To-day the hamlet has three wirelesses in it. In the next hamlet, which is larger, there are five.

The wirelesses are alongside cottages in which old men and women are a little afraid to gossip "lest they boys' wireless next door do 'ear what we do say," and a crone has complained sourly that her cold is due to her neighbour's habit of keeping her window open! The children of the two hamlets go to school together, and some light may be thrown for you on the home life into which resurgent Nature has brought wireless, by the fact that, when asked by the schoolmistress to say what struck them most about me, several of them cried out together, "He's so clean"!

Our neighbouring hamlet is the one in which three young fellows, in adolescent repudiation of its way of living, are taking the first steps to enter the Metropolitan Police.

It is not only the wireless—the man who brings round the oil reckons to spend twenty pounds on his—which is bringing new conceptions to this hamlet. A motor-'bus, which connects with the motor-'bus to the county town, has begun to come a little out of its way to give us the chance of joining it at the cross-roads.

Many things are becoming new, have become quite new since, this time last year, I began these occasional articles. Then I should have been startled by an assurance that wireless would be arriving so soon and would be doing all that it is doing for us.

It is the young fellows, of course, who are putting in crystal sets and aspiring to two valves. The middle-aged seem to remain as they were, but almost unconsciously make a certain progress in order to keep themselves in countenance before a younger generation which threatens their self-respect. So a spirit, the Time Spirit, is moving on the waters that looked as stagnant as still.

The Time Spirit lately appeared to us in the unspectable guise of an upholstery class. The class was started after prudent preparation. It actually drew out of our seeming stagnation as many students as the teacher, with an experience in other counties, had ever had before! Now we have begun first aid. Twenty young fellows attend weekly, and beyond this, on their own account, gather one night a week for additional practice. Who run the class? Two railway porters from the Junction. What were these porters before they went to the station? Farm labourers.

Who brought in the wireless? Two young fellows, one of whom lives in a cottage rather in a class by itself. They "read a bit" there. The other lad was the parson's son. For a few years past this boy has gone on his bicycle to a secondary school six miles off. No *pro bono publico* about these youths' wireless, of course. The lads were amusing themselves. The other wirelesses have been set up by imitative fellows of about the same age and by three young married men, equally bent on entertaining themselves.

So you can see that this little advance against sloth, intellectual poverty, conservatism, and the public-house came simply by education, and, like the success of the upholstery and first-aid teaching, by making an avenue for wits which had had no chance of congenial development. Some people would have denied that the wits were there. But they were, only they had never had a chance.

A lady in another shire once wrote to me that she had tried lending books in her village, but they were very little borrowed. "We have tried to do something for this village," she said, "but it was a failure, so we have ceased our efforts."

In my own hamlet and the next I have not been able to lend more than sixty books in a year, most of them to sick people. But I am not discouraged. Reading is a habit. The uncultivated always feel that they have no concern with books or that books are knowledge at secondhand. Young men, unaccustomed to sitting still indoors after an active day in the open, and lacking the light, quiet, and general convenience for and inducement to reading that you and I enjoy, are unready for a recreation which does not mean doing something with their hands or feet. Two village libraries I have heard of were stopped because the younger lads who came to them on wet evenings—when there was nowhere else for them to go—began to shy the books to one another, and even brought in a football. What was more likely?

Our young men and young women are ready for culture by making and doing, not by the printed page. What is wrong about that? As a matter of fact, as many as two score first-aid and wireless primers have been procured. We are getting round to reading when we find it to be worth while. And such books as we have bought, you will notice, are not novels.

The other night the hamlets got a shock. They had the opportunity of hearing a young fellow with workers' hands and workers' tones, who had studied at a working-men's college. He was still, in a large measure, happily, the country workman. But he could say, standing up before us, what he feels and the people of our hamlets feel. He had read and heard things of which the hamlets had heard little, had met people they had not had the chance of meeting, and he was not spoilt in the very least but bettered by what he had gone through. We could hardly help noting that his knowledge had been got out of the condemned books, and that he had been taught by professors, who are commonly men and women who speak, not out of workaday experience, but out of books.

This young fellow spoke, honestly and wittily, of debts as well as rights, of ideas as well as things, and of a personal relationship to the unseen and eternal which had shaped and was shaping his life. He spoke in simple phrases from his heart in a moving way. The young and middle-aged men and women who heard him had never heard the like. If this was religion, then something that had formerly been mentioned to them as religion, something that did after all seem a bit ineffectual and far-fetched and a little out-of-date when you come to think of it, was certainly not religion. And they not only listened attentively and applauded, and grinned in a friendly way at the home thrusts, but gave to the collection twice as much as they give at church, when they go there.

But more and more of them stay away most Sundays. The leadership of the hamlets, which had passed from the hands of the parson we could scarcely say whither, is now clearly seen to be in the hands of the schoolmistress and the students of wireless and first-aid

—and the railway porters from the Junction, who come to us once a week, rain or shine, five miles for nothing. No, not for nothing. I imagine they have some notion, not of "doing good," but of being of service. Where did they get the notion? Not from the preaching of some of the parsons round about, I feel sure. Is it fire from the belly of trade unionism or of politics? Or is it born of that essence of Christianity which has long since entered into our common life?

H. C.

### A BALTIC LEAGUE?

WIDE currency in Europe seems to have been given to a report that Great Britain and France are aiming at the formation of an anti-Bolshevik block consisting of the "Border States," that is, the States bordering Soviet Russia from the Baltic to the Black Sea. In their order these States are Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Poland, Roumania, and Bulgaria. Lithuania is sometimes included among the Border States, but this is a mistake, for, with the Poles in possession of Vilna and the Vilna district, no part of her frontier marches with that of Soviet Russia, though their boundaries are not far distant from each other. The report that Britain and France were trying to form the other States into an anti-Bolshevik block had spread to such an extent as to be the subject of an interpellation in the French Chamber recently. Replying to M. Marcel Cachin, the well-known Communist deputy, M. Herriot denied that the policy of France was directed towards the encirclement of Soviet Russia. He took occasion to refer to the fate of Georgia, and said that such grave events had occurred in the Baltic States that it was easy to understand why these nations should desire to protect themselves. He added that the smaller States must be able to take the "measures necessary for their defence" without France or her Allies being accused of this policy of encirclement. It must be supposed that if a question on similar lines had been asked in the House of Commons, the spokesman of our Government would have made a very similar reply. Apart from Georgia, "denied the right to live," M. Herriot had in his mind the recent Red Rising in Reval, the object of which was the subversion of the Republic of Esthonia. It was a serious attempt which had been carefully planned and prepared in Soviet Russia, and there is evidence to support the statement that Soviet troops were in readiness near the Esthonian frontier, and Soviet warships were in the Gulf of Finland close to Reval itself, for the purpose of assisting to final triumph the revolutionary movement if it had proved as successful as had been hoped. The Esthonian Government, however, was equal to the occasion and quickly put down the revolt in the capital, but this might not have been enough if the masses of the Esthonian people had not shown, by keeping perfectly quiet, that they had no sympathy whatever with the rising.

In his remarks, M. Herriot referred definitely to the Baltic States, and said nothing about the other Border States. He mentioned Poland by name. The reason for his speaking of the Baltic States was obvious. A few days before there had been a conference at Helsingfors, which was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, and Poland, with the object of discussing matters of common interest and of making certain working arrangements for their mutual advantage. These States have treaties with the Soviet Government, all of which postulate good neighbourly relations between them, but, notwithstanding these

treaties, Esthonia, Latvia, and Poland feel most acutely that they are constantly menaced by Soviet Russia. Though there is a fairly strong current of opinion in Finland in favour of close co-operation with the other Baltic States, the majority of her people are opposed to anything in the nature of a military alliance with them. In 1922 a conference at Warsaw of the Foreign Ministers of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, and Poland resulted in the signing of a treaty of alliance, but Finland declined to ratify it, and accordingly it lapsed. In 1923 Esthonia and Latvia definitely leagued themselves together for defensive and other purposes. A year ago another conference of the four States was held at Warsaw, but no military league was formed. Finland was opposed to it as before. And over this conference, as over those which preceded it, lay the shadow of the bitter quarrel between Poland and Lithuania concerning Vilna. Latvia sympathizes with Lithuania in this matter, and, besides, is perturbed and greatly offended by the claims made by the Poles for the cession to them of the Illukst district, including Dvinsk, of her eastern territory. On the other hand, it is Latvia which, next to Esthonia, has felt and feels most severely the pressure of Soviet Russia in the shape of threats, propaganda, and intrigues. Nothing so sensational and so directly menacing has occurred in Riga as that which took place in Reval in December, but the Soviet pressure is little less formidable and is quite as persistent. If it be said that all this Soviet pressure on Esthonia and Latvia is due to their containing the former Tsarist harbours of Reval, Riga, and Libau, the terminals of trunk railways from Petrograd and Moscow, it should be known that Soviet Russia has been made as free commercially in these ports as are the Esthonians and the Letts themselves. No impediment whatever hinders the passage of goods across the frontier to the sea. The pressure of the Soviet on these States is entirely political. The situation of Poland *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia needs no elaboration. On the other side of the account, however, should be placed the greatly improved financial position of Poland.

It remains to be seen whether the discordant elements in the Baltic situation outlined above will prevent the States concerned from taking the "measures necessary for their defence," to quote M. Herriot again. The knowledge that the Soviet Government has just assigned 13,000,000 gold roubles for propaganda among them will assuredly count with them. Yet the agenda before the recent Helsingfors Conference contained no reference to military measures at all. The Conference was called on to consider (1) an arbitration treaty, with respect to which some work had been done at previous meetings, (2) certain economic agreements, and (3) means for the promotion and expansion of the cultural life of the States. But it is significant that the Geneva Protocol dominated the proceedings. Following the lines of the Protocol, an arbitration treaty was passed and signed. Agreements were come to making for greater facilities as regards communications and for simplifying passport arrangements; both are matters in which there is room for considerable improvement, as merchants and travellers in those regions know. Some steps were taken for developing the "intellectual collaboration" of the peoples of the States. The question of disarmament was postponed till the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, which is to be held in March. This is a vital question in these States. If measures necessary for their defence did not figure on the programme of the representatives of the States, there can be little doubt that they were the staple of their informal and unofficial conversations. It could



scarcely be otherwise in the circumstances. It may be that an understanding was reached; if so, it is not likely to be made public, for that would be to destroy, or, at any rate, reduce, its value. At the Warsaw Conference of 1922 it was agreed that if Soviet Russia attacked any one of the four States—Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, or Poland—the rest were to meet at once and concert what should be done to meet the emergency, and to act accordingly. Perhaps the understanding, if there was one, was on the same lines.

Six years have passed since these States achieved their independence and maintained it against the assaults of Soviet Russia, after long and sanguinary struggles. Nothing can be more natural than that they should endeavour to preserve it by all the means in their power. This is not to say that they should form, have formed, or are forming, an anti-Bolshevik block in the sense of its being actively hostile to Soviet Russia, of contemplating war on Soviet Russia. Considered coldly and dispassionately, the very idea of such a thing is absurd, though it is the idea Soviet propaganda desires to spread abroad, so as to misrepresent and confuse the actual position. A block for purposes of self-defence is another thing altogether. But, as already indicated, only Esthonia and Latvia have openly formed a defensive alliance. It is perfectly certain that if Soviet Russia attacks them, they will fight to the death for their freedom and their liberties. And they will fight together as one. Their unity appears in the sitting in Reval of a joint committee which is concluding negotiations that will make them one economic entity. From the economic point of view nothing could suit them better than the friendliest commercial relations with Soviet Russia, because northern and western Russia are their economic hinterland. Their great desire—they would be insane were it otherwise—is to live on good terms with Soviet Russia. This is the attitude of these States. What is that of Soviet Russia? In 1921 Finland was afraid that Soviet Russia would declare war upon her, because of the rising of the Finns in eastern Karelia against the Soviet. Finland made overtures to the other Baltic States for a defensive alliance, with the result that Soviet Russia at once changed her tactics, and began to pursue the *divide et impera* policy towards all these States, and this is her policy to-day. Though her Press contains plenty of threats, she herself is careful to abstain from overt acts of war, but goes on trying to play off one Baltic State against another. In all the circumstances it would not be surprising if the Baltic States did form an anti-Bolshevik block definitely hostile to Soviet Russia, but this is not their aim, which is to maintain and consolidate their independence, and has nothing aggressive about it. This is an aim which surely should have not only the warm sympathy but the cordial approval of every liberty-loving Briton. In any case it is well that the people of this country should understand the situation, and give at least their moral support to those who deserve it.

ROBERT MACHRAY.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE PROTOCOL

SIR,—May I answer the various points made by Mr. McNair in his valuable letter last week?

1. He quotes M. Politis' report as follows:—

"There is a third class of disputes to which the new system of pacific settlement can also not be applied. These are disputes which aim at revising treaties and inter-

*national acts in force, or which seek to jeopardize the existing territorial integrity of signatory States."*

By inserting italics in this quotation Mr. McNair might lead the casual reader into thinking that he agreed with the criticisms which have so often been made of it. It may therefore be useful to recall the words of Sir F. Pollock, who said that this passage "only recognizes what no lawyer needs to be told—that the proposals for the revision as distinct from the construction of existing agreements cannot be dealt with in the way of legal argument and decision." In other words, no valid objection can be made against the Protocol because its arbitral processes cannot be used for the alteration of existing legal rights.

2. Mr. McNair says that the Protocol "assumes permanence in international affairs" and that "the absence of machinery for revision of the *status quo* is an additional attraction" to such States as France and the Little Entente which have benefited by the recent treaties of peace. His statement may create misapprehension unless it is added that the ex-enemy States which have suffered by the treaties of peace are also in favour of the Protocol. Bulgaria signed the Protocol some time ago. Austrian opinion has been warmly and consistently in its favour. Hungarian opinion is no less favourable; even so ardent a Nationalist as the Leader of the Opposition, Count Apponyi, who at Geneva fought so persistently for compulsory arbitration when the Protocol was being made, wrote in the "Pester Lloyd" of November 30th, 1924, as follows:—

"The objection which might be raised from our point of view that it stabilizes an international political state of things which we ourselves have no interest to maintain cannot be regarded as well-founded. The Protocol contains guarantees for the rule of law as against the rule of force. . . . That a state of things which we dislike will also derive benefit so long as it exists from those guarantees is an accident which cannot be altered. The remedy lies in the change of that political situation itself, and the circumstances for such a change will certainly not be worse if abusive power is checked."

In his recent declaration the German Chancellor, Herr Luther, in commenting on a speech by the French Prime Minister, said:—

"M. Herriot put forward as an ultimate objective a world pact which had already been sketched in the Geneva Protocol last autumn; such a world pact appeals to me also as an ultimate objective. . . . On behalf of Germany I accept M. Herriot's three-word programme of arbitration, security, and disarmament."

He could hardly have used plainer or stronger language.

3. Mr. McNair asserts that Article 19 of the Covenant is "a pious aspiration," and he proposes a conference, to be held in 1926, to prepare "machinery for the reconsideration of such treaties and territorial arrangements as may become inapplicable and may endanger the peace of the world."

Few will object on principle to such a conference. But can Mr. McNair hope that it could lead in 1926 to practical results? So far as it is not already provided for by Article 19, his object can only be achieved when Governments are willing to accept the revision of their territorial frontiers by a majority vote of other States. Does anyone believe that Governments will be ready next year to agree to this? For example, will the British Government be willing to submit its sovereignty over Gibraltar and Malta to a majority vote of other States so long as it believes that those points constitute an important factor in the general system of defence upon which the safety of the Empire depends? Clearly it will not. It is indeed safe to say that no possible British Government would ever accept an international verdict on Gibraltar and Malta—they are only two of many possible examples—until time and experience have proved that the safety and integrity of the Empire can be entrusted to a general system of international guarantees.

Surely the same thing is true of all, or almost all, disputed territory, at least in Europe. It is no longer because of any innate desire to own other people's land that Central European Governments to-day seek to extend their frontiers; it is because additional territory constitutes an extra military barrier against an ever-present danger of invasion, or because in some other way it is thought to add to military strength. It is often difficult to understand a foreign point of view; but may we not deduce, from what we all know would be the British Government's attitude, the plain moral

that only the removal of the fear of aggression will ever create a new outlook on territorial questions among Governments and peoples?

And this fear of aggression cannot be removed by a single conference. Mr. McNair's purpose is to secure change in the *status quo* not by war—he makes no such suggestion—but by organized political means. But the mere creation of machinery will not help him, unless it be accompanied by the growth of the political forces of justice and reason, which alone can give it life and power. Those who favour the Protocol believe that nothing will so stimulate and foster the growth of these forces as the abolition of the threat of war. Genuine confidence in a new international order free from violence would create changes of opinion that would be startling in their rapidity and scope. And experience has already shown that in the League, as elsewhere, political forces which result from real changes of opinion rapidly outstrip the forms of the constitutional machinery through which they work. If the fear of war is once removed, it may well be that the formal alteration of Article 19, which Mr. McNair desires, will never be required, for the reason that the weapon which that Article already furnishes will by itself become politically irresistible.

May we not beg Mr. McNair, and those who share his doubts, to think again before they throw away this unparalleled chance of securing wholehearted Franco-German agreement upon a great international scheme for lasting peace, on grounds which, may it be said with great deference, are purely doctrinaire?—Yours, &c.,

P. J. NOEL BAKER.

SIR,—The fear felt by Mr. McNair and others that the adoption of the Protocol would hinder the revision of unjust and obsolete treaty provisions is only based on the fact that any nation which, in order to enforce such revision, invades territory outside its own borders and refuses to agree to an armistice when requested by the League, is declared to be an "aggressor," and is to be forcibly restrained—which in all, or nearly all, cases would be a quite sufficient deterrent. This is no more than is really implicit in Articles X. and XVI. of the Covenant—but apart from this, does Mr. McNair seriously think that the risk of war would be lessened and the peaceable revision of treaties promoted if individual States, having even a just grievance, were allowed to continue to "take the law into their own hands"? Such methods are forbidden to individuals within a nation—however great the provocation, and however imperfect the laws—because it is recognized that a "breaking of the peace" usually causes many more ills than it cures, and this is still more emphatically true of differences between nations.

There is nothing in the Protocol to prevent all sorts of agitation within a country, and the effective working of Clause XIX. of the Covenant for the peaceable revision of treaties would surely be hindered and not helped if it were liable to be interrupted by invasions across existing frontiers.—Yours, &c.,

W. S. ROWNTREE.

Scarborough, February 7th, 1925.

[The fear which we share with Mr. McNair is that "disputes which aim at revising treaties and international acts in force," to which, according to M. Politis, the Protocol cannot be applied, will cease (if the Protocol is adopted) to be amenable to the procedure for peaceful settlement set out in Articles XI. to XV. of the Covenant. States wishing to maintain such treaties could refuse to discuss revision and could claim the protection of all the signatories to the Protocol while they barred the way to progress. Our own view is that to stereotype the *status quo* in this way would not necessarily be bad for the world for the next few years, but that to attempt to do so permanently would inevitably lead either to an explosion or to a breach of the obligations implied in the Protocol.—Ed., NATION.]

#### ESTHONIA.

SIR,—I cannot refrain from answering Mr. Hitchcock's letter which appears in THE NATION for January 31st. He says that the success of the Bolsheviks would have meant blood, destruction, and terror; and then proceeds to argue that therefore the nature of the methods used to suppress them does not very much matter. And, in so

saying, he gives away the whole case against Communism. Why, for instance, have we of the Labour Party refused all connection with the Communist Party? Not, if I judge rightly, merely, or chiefly, on grounds of differences of ultimate aim or of economic theory. We have—to put it mildly—no objection to a Socialist State; I think we should be unlikely to refuse political co-operation because we did not quite believe in Marxian economics; but the insuperable barrier to joint action is the appeal to force, the "heavy civil war," the sacrifice of liberty, the abandonment of the appeal to reason. To think that a White terror does not much matter if it prevents a Red terror is to abandon that moral ground. One Terror is exactly as bad as another; and if our choice really lay between the two, then our hopes for civilization and the ordered and peaceful progress of humanity would be the vainest things in the world. And to meet allegations of specific injustices in Esthonia, or anywhere else, by saying that they are in a good cause, is to abandon all ethical standards, and admit implicitly that any means are justifiable in political struggles.—Yours, &c.,

A. SUSAN LAWRENCE.

41, Grosvenor Road, S.W.

SIR,—Now that Mr. Hitchcock has entered the lists against Miss Susan Lawrence, I feel it will be more chivalrous for me to retire. Before doing so, however, I must crave permission to disclaim the title of a passionate defender of the Esthonian Government, if by that description a thick-and-thin supporter of all its measures be implied; for there are several things the Esthonian Government has done of which I cannot approve. It is, however, futile to expect perfection from human beings or any aggregation of human beings. My respect and admiration are, nevertheless, aroused by the devoted courage and patriotism which the Esthonian people (only 1,500,000) and their representative Government have shown in face of a big and bullying neighbour.

Having failed to defeat the Esthonians in fair fight, Bolshevik Russia is now trying to destroy that obstinate little nation by means of sap and mine and poison gas. Esthonia has her back to the wall and is battling for her existence. If in that combat innocent victims may here and there be made, that, however regrettable, seems unfortunately to be unavoidable in all warfare. There are always, unhappily, innocent victims.

Beyond this I have nothing to add to Mr. Hitchcock's able letter, except, perhaps, an interesting reminiscence. In the early 'eighties the Tsarist Government decided to rousify its Baltic Provinces, and entrusted this duty to the late Michael Kapoustine, an international jurist of European reputation, in whose house Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace wrote his famous book on Russia. When I asked M. Kapoustine how long it would take him to accomplish his task, he replied confidently, "Three years." That was forty years ago!—Yours, &c.,

E. A. BRAYLEY HODGETTS.

February 2nd, 1925.

P.S.—I have only just read, since writing the above, Mr. Georg Meri's "Communism in Reval" in this month's "Contemporary Review," to which I would refer your readers.

#### THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

SIR,—Disappointing in many ways, there is one respect in which a Conservative Government always fulfils expectation—when the oratorical tap is turned on the same old twaddle gushes forth. Here is Mr. Bridgeman, who desires Peace. And he knows how to get it. A strong Navy! How simple and how original! The lamented Tirpitz had the same idea, with what peaceful consequences we all know. But Mr. Bridgeman has another idea—the development of Singapore. Some mischief-makers suggest that this is directed against Japan, but that, of course, is absurd. Japanese statesmen do not protest, and Japanese admirals positively like the idea. Fortunately, no inconvenient "Voice" asked Mr. Bridgeman against what Power the developed Singapore was aimed. Mr. Bridgeman is not quite a Tirpitz, he is merely using up the German's old clothes.—Yours, &c.,

Vox.



## DR. W. CROTCH.

SIR,—For some long time I have been endeavouring to obtain full particulars of the life and works—both musical and artistic—of the well-known Dr. Crotch (1775-1847).

I am doing this because I feel sure his ability and greatness are far from being known.

There must be many MS. musical compositions, letters, lectures, artistic works, also many portraits of him, still in private hands, which ought to be consulted before a Life of him could be written.

If any readers of this short appeal could, and would, help me in this literary work, I should be most grateful if they would communicate with me at once.—Yours, &c.,

King's College, Cambridge.

A. H. MANN.

February 5th, 1925.

## EGYPTIAN COTTON.

SIR,—Your contributor A. G. G., in THE NATION of January 17th, writes: "The character of Egyptian cotton

has been so degraded since the control of Egypt passed into the hands of the National Government," implying a causal connection. Later, he writes, more explicitly: "The letting down of the standard of Egyptian cotton, due, among other things, to the discharge of all the British experts in the seed laboratories."

If the latter fact were true, the theory would be plausible—except to those who know the inevitable lapse of time before anything that happens in seed laboratories can affect the general agriculture of a country.

However, in the light of the fact that the British personnel of the seed laboratories in Cairo is the same now as in December, 1921, before the Declaration of Independence, I am afraid that A. G. G. must look elsewhere for the deterioration of the quality of Egyptian cotton—Yours, &c.,

C. H. BROWN, B.Sc. (Agric.).

Botanical Section, Ministry of Agriculture, Cairo.

January 29th, 1925.

## THE FATHER OF ENGLISH RADICALISM\*

By G. M. TREVELYAN.

AND so, in the intervals of his other activities, Mr. Cole has been writing the life of Cobbett.

It is an adequate and satisfactory life of a very great man, who stands by the sources of those modern social problems that still vex and embroil us. Indeed, our age of war and post-war misery resembles Cobbett's time more closely than the later Victorian age. Though the labouring classes are no longer vilely oppressed as a hundred years ago, the distress and bitterness of that age have returned in other forms. To-day we once more think of politics as the handmaid of social questions, as Cobbett thought, and as Gladstone and Salisbury only thought in part. And so Cobbett looms bigger in our mental horizon to-day than in 1887, when he was allotted three pages of the Dictionary of National Biography as against four and a half for John Payne Collier, Shakespearean critic, in the same volume.

The other reason why Cobbett persists and bestrides the centuries is that he wrote like an angel—fortunately a fallen one. Abuse is generally very tiresome to read. Yet one is never tired of Cobbett, though three-quarters of him is abuse of some person or persons misunderstood. What is the secret of the fascination?

First and foremost there is his style. It is not artificial or carefully studied. It is more like talk or oratory than literature. It is journalism at its very rare best—the unrestrained flow of natural genius bubbling up from the depths. It is picturesque, not because he consciously ornaments it, but because his way of thinking was picturesque—far too picturesque for accurate and fair-minded judgments, but that is another question. Take two passages written in his old age, on the verge of the grave, giving his impressions of the House of Commons into which he had at last been elected. He is complaining that the House transacts its business by night instead of by day:—

"The chafferings in the House are of little more consequence to us than is the ceaseless nightly din that the monotonous Kiddadids (grasshoppers) are now making in the woods of America. It is curious that these noisy things also begin their noise at sunset and cease it at sunrise."

While abusing the House of Commons, we are suddenly transplanted by this true prose-poet into the heart of the forest primeval that he had known in his military youth in New Brunswick. Note, too, the vivid "are now making," instead of the mere "make" that any ordinary writer would have used. Or again, take his

comment on the mob that cheered the burning down of the Houses of Parliament in 1834:—

"The *Herald* exclaims, 'Oh, unreflecting people!' Now, perhaps the 'mob' exulted because the 'mob' was really a *reflecting* 'mob.' When even a dog, or a horse, receives any treatment that it does not like, it always shuns the place where it got such treatment. The 'unreflecting mob' perhaps remembered what manner of things had been done in this house now burning under its eyes."

Who but Cobbett would have put in the touch about the horse?

But besides the style there is the man behind it. One likes to read his abuse because one tastes him beneath it, and he is not bitter. Country-born, country-bred, sweet of heart, devoted to a large family and many friends, captivating everyone he met until a subject of dispute arose and often even after the blows had been exchanged, John Bull in all John Bull's large-heartedness and with none of his conventions, Cobbett was in character curiously opposed to the great journalistic genius of a hundred years before, from whom in boyhood he drew his first inspiration, reading under a haystack the "Tale of a Tub," which he had bought for 3d. instead of his day's dinner.

There have been good books about Cobbett—Mr. E. I. Carlyle's, for instance, though it is too short to serve for the final biography. But in Mr. Cole's biography I think we have "the life," and may rest satisfied for a century or so, after which no doubt Cobbett and everyone else who ever lived in the tide of time will again look quite different. Mr. Cole as biographer is eminently sane—there is madness enough in Cobbett to need a sane biographer, or we should feel ourselves in Cloud-cuckoo Land. Yet he is not too tame, neither. No one would be fitted to write the life of Cobbett who was not prepared to drink Teufelsdröckh's toast—"Die Sache der Armen in Gottes und Teufels Namen." And so—in the view of an old-time Liberal and humble, abashed middle-class historian like myself—Mr. Cole sometimes omits or exaggerates aspects of the affair. But what good biographer ever did not do so? His criticisms of Mr. Graham Wallas's "Place" remind us of that. Mr. Cole is as sensible and fair-minded as the best biographers are wont to be, and does not offend, even where he does not persuade. On the First Reform Bill, its authors and its consequences—a nodal point in the story—he seems to me quite just. But I should like to hear Mr. Keynes's views of Mr. Cole and Cobbett on

\* "The Life of William Cobbett." By G. D. H. Cole. (Collins. 18s.)

"paper" and "the funds"—subjects I am not competent to understand.

And on the broadest issue of all, the real character of Cobbett's service to England—not "to the world," for Cobbett hated foreigners—Mr. Cole bears a revealing light, because he knows the political and the social history of the period as very few people know it who write thereon. The story flows on from cover to cover, always a narrative, never an essay, at least not for more than a page or so at a time. It is never dull, partly because it is largely made up of Cobbett's own account of his own proceedings; he wrote his autobiography scattered over his voluminous journalism of forty years, and Mr. Cole has judiciously collected it and reproduced it, partly in Cobbett's words, partly in his own, with a running comment that sifts (hard task!) the true fact from the journalistic inexactitude, and explains Cobbett's furious words in relation to the social and political circumstances that caused their utterance. The net result is that the book, though as stout as Cobbett himself, is excellent reading throughout its 435 pages. For we are always in company with two very interesting men, one of them a giant, a curiosity, a lump of good nature and malice, compact of monstrous egoism and of altruism that has no thought for self.

Egoism is an asset to a journalist, if he is a very great and at bottom a very lovable man. Such was Cobbett, and he carries off with success such a mammoth load of *ego* as suffices to stagger and sink lesser and less lovable men who blow themselves out in his image. In this type of personal journalism, with a man bullying his readers all the time in virtue of his own superiority, it is after a while a choice between loving or hating the fellow. And it is easier to love Cobbett, especially now that it is a hundred years too late to be in danger of becoming one of his innumerable victims. One can well imagine how the poor loved him, when the rest of the world seemed to have entered into conspiracy to rob, oppress, and vilify them. A bully was needed to stand up against that host of conscious and unconscious bullies. And old England, the passing England of the yeoman and the alehouse on the heath, produced as a last effort this glorious, unchallengeable bully, with no touch of cowardice in all his vast bulk, and, when once outside the ring, no malice.

An additional cause of cocksureness and self-satisfaction in Cobbett, besides what Nature had done for him in that line, was that he had educated himself. He had practically no schooling, but had been his own stern and exacting schoolmaster. How often has one seen that circumstance cause remarkable men permanently to overestimate themselves and the value of their opinions—though few, indeed, change them as often as Cobbett.

Another remark of Mr. Cole's about his hero is interesting: "Cobbett's great books and his greatest journalism were the work of an old man"—that is, of a man between fifty and seventy. The same, I suppose, is yet more true of Voltaire, who only came to close grips with *l'infâme* in his old age. Neither the fighting spirit nor the inspiration of good prose is wholly confined to youth.

And now it is time to let Mr. Cole speak for himself.

"The working class of the Victorian age," he writes, "faced with the accomplished fact of the Industrial Revolution, and born into the new conditions of factory regimentation, had no ear for Cobbett's message. It died, to be born again only when the new system began to break up, and the illusions of mechanical progress began to show clearly through the cracks of the Victorian philosophy. But the working class of Cobbett's own day was actually in the throes of the Revolution. It had not been born into the factory, or

reared wholly in the stinking industrial towns. It was largely made up of peasants driven off the land, craftsmen whose means of life and independence were being taken away by the new machines and the accumulation of capital, men and women who, like Cobbett, looked back to old times rather than forward with the philosophers of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. These workers, it is true, were up against the new conditions, as Cobbett, able to create his own independence, was not. They therefore paid little heed to his opinions on trade unions, strikes, and the relations between employers and workers. When they could, they organized: when they felt strong enough, or were goaded to desperation, they struck. But, while they did not take Cobbett's advice on these matters, so much nearer their daily life than his, they heeded his philosophy and accepted his political leadership, because he was a man like-minded with themselves, interpreting their own instincts and deep-seated desires, feeling with them the horror of the new system, sharing in their desperate yearning for lost independence and the smell of the green country. They were the people, as he was the leader, of the transition."

This is true and well said. And yet Cobbett's views, I think, had a greater influence on working-class opinion in the Victorian age than his biographer allows. For in the Victorian age the working classes followed his advice to interest themselves in politics, and to demand the Parliamentary franchise. In the 'sixties the working class of the towns secured it under the leadership of Bright and Gladstone. In 1885, two generations too late to save the countryside, the agricultural labourer, whom Cobbett most cared for, was admitted to citizenship, and in 1888 to Local Government. The working-class movement in the nineteenth century was quite as much Radical in alliance with the Liberal Party, as it was Labour. And more than any single man Cobbett was the father of English Radicalism.

Victorian Radicalism, like Cobbett who did most to inspire it, stood not for a doctrine but for a spirit. It was not tied to Liberalism, still less to *laissez-faire* or to Socialism. It passed the Factory Acts, abolished the Corn Acts, forced on the franchise, education, freedom of speech and Press, and altered the whole attitude of the upper to the lower class. The improvement of the lot of the labouring classes between the death of Cobbett and the death of Queen Victoria was so great that they will be lucky if they get as much good out of Continental Socialism and Communism in the twentieth century as they got out of English Radicalism in the nineteenth.

## LIFE.

By I. GUREVITCH.

THE bridge was deserted. The street-lamps shed a dim light on the stone parapet surmounted with a cast-iron grating.

Chmutov had already reached the middle span when he noticed a coat with a note pinned to it.

"Drowned himself!" The thought flashed through Chmutov's mind and caused an unpleasant cold shudder to run down his spine.

"Life is not worth while! Men are brutes, caring for their own selfish happiness. Why be in agony and suffer?—Egorov," ran the note.

Chmutov sighed. Leaning his elbows on the parapet, he whispered, "Sensible devil! He's right. Life isn't worth while! Abramov, for instance, lives like a lord, and I, I suffer from cold, hunger, and humiliation. Life isn't worth while!"

With a sudden decisive gesture Chmutov threw his coat off, hurriedly added his name to Egorov's note, and jumped into the water.

Hardly had the last circle caused by Chmutov's fall subsided when Sukhotin came on to the bridge.



His attention was immediately drawn to the two coats and the note.

"Drowned himself!" The thought flashed through Sukhotin's mind, causing an unpleasant cold shudder to run down his spine.

He read the note, and exclaimed, "Yes, they're right! This is a dog's life! You stand the lifelong day behind the counter and measure stuff with a yard measure while your boss draws all the profit. Is life worth while? Eat, drink, sleep, and measure! No, they've drowned themselves, I'll do it, too!"

Sukhotin took off his overcoat, coat, and hat, added his name to the note, and threw himself into the water.

A few minutes after this enter the student Pereversev. His attention was immediately drawn to the pile of clothing and the white note.

"Drowned themselves!" The thought flashed through Pereversev's mind, causing an unpleasant cold shudder to run along his spine.

Having read the note, he smiled bitterly and said: "Here's an illustration of the capitalist system. Three lives. . . . Who knows what they might have given to the people had they lived in the State of the future! Life is not worth while. It's even criminal to live when the proletariat's only outlet is from the bridge into the river. And I was going to the theatre! What a wretch I am!" He cracked his fingers, and added to the note: "Men are hateful to me, and I am hateful to myself. Give my alarm clock to the maidservant; I owe her for three French buns. Fight on for universal suffrage.—Pereversev."

Then he took off his overcoat and tunic and fell into the water.

Suddenly a river policeman appeared on the scene.

"Eh!" he exclaimed, "somebody took advantage of my absence. Eh! What a crowd! Well, I daresay I shall get into a nice mess over it."

He scratched his neck, swore lustily, and, spitting, took the note. With difficulty he read it.

"M'yes," he whispered thoughtfully. "I shall get into a nice row. One drowned, never mind, or even two—but a whole crowd! At my bridge, too. As if there weren't enough bridges in town."

He scratched his neck anew, and saying, "Better the river than a reprimand," unclasped his belt with the sabre, threw off his cloak and fell into the water.

\* \* \*

"Lucky to-day, ain't I?" said Egorov, rising from the bottom of an empty boat.

"Gee, what a lot!" he whispered joyously, examining the coats and cloaks. "God be praised! Struck oil this time. The note is a fine draw nowadays!"

He pulled his own ragged coat out of the heap, put it on, and, lifting the rest on his shoulder, slowly went home.

## THE DRAMA

### IBSEN COMES BACK FROM THE HEIGHTS.

Lyric Theatre: "The Lady from the Sea."

THE fate of Ibsen in England has been curious, in that he has become *démodé* without ever having been fashionable. The stupidity of the English theatre during the latter part of the nineteenth century prevented this master of stagecraft ever being revealed to the general public, and as a consequence he became the esoteric deity of the more tiresome intellectual coteries, who worshipped him not as a great dramatist, but as an enemy of "insincerity," or a propagator of the prevailing advanced ideas, who had brought the stage into touch with "everything that is most intelligent in modern life." This was the heyday of "Ghosts," "The Doll's House," and "Pillars of Society." I am old enough to remember the tail-end of the Ibsen movement, and the papers we used to read to each other at the University on

the thought of Ibsen. Then came the inevitable reaction. An artist cannot live on novel ideas, as the ideas rapidly cease to be novel, and Ibsen became in turn the symbol of late nineteenth-century stuffiness. Now I am informed that the younger generation have never read a line of him, and Mr. Cox tells me that his books are now never taken out of the London Library.

It is difficult to blame young people very much for this, so silly had the master's admirers made him, and he did go, in truth, through a tiresome middle period of a sociological and realistic nature, and this was the period most known in England. But it is the early Ibsen, the period of "Peer Gynt," "Brandt," and "The Pretenders," and the late period, of which "The Lady from the Sea" is the earliest example, of "Little Eyolf," "John Gabriel Borkman," and "The Master Builder," which are of permanent value. At these times he was a pure poet, a man "with a troll in him," as the Master Builder says, and his characters are pure projections of a goblin mind. The "realism" is non-existent in these plays, which are symbolical, fantastical, or frankly supernatural. He is also singularly incompetent in many ways; that is to say, he employs shamelessly and rightly the conventions of the stage. People come on because they have something to say, ordering other people off for the purpose, and themselves retire, when they have said all they want. There is no attempt to make the play technically "like life." If he had wished it, William Archer could have torn Ibsen to pieces, just as he thought he had destroyed the Elizabethans.

These reflections are the result of seeing an extremely interesting performance of "The Lady from the Sea," which has been given as a special play for a charity. It was written before "Hedda Gabler," which now reads so tiresomely, though it is an excellent stage play. But "The Lady from the Sea" is in the last manner, and "Hedda Gabler" is not. It is a magnificent acting play, which does not date at all. It is written in no period, and is of no place, save that there is about it a troll-like strangeness which points to Northern Europe. It is a play that could with profit be put on for an ordinary run, as the deadly fumes of the "advanced theatre" no longer stifle it. Its weakness is that it contains only one really interesting character, the Lady from the Sea herself. The other characters are dully drawn. But she is full of a strange, unearthly beauty, the product of a civilization based on the most absurd and romantically beautiful of all mythologies. She was excellently played by the grandniece of the author, Miss Lillebil Ibsen, whose very slight foreign accent just lent her a further suggestion of inhumanity and remoteness. For the Lady from the Sea is never quite one of us. Even though at the end she has exercised choice and will remain with us rather than follow her strange seaborne lover, she will remain as a visitor, and never become a compatriot. She is the symbol of something remote and unobtainable, that at which we all clasp but can never wholly grip. There is in her an elf-like unsubstantiality, which keeps us never certain of her, and thus makes her for ever desirable. She exists to make us all dissatisfied as the Master Builder is dissatisfied, as the parents of Little Eyolf are dissatisfied, and as, in a different way, John Gabriel Borkman was dissatisfied, too.

For Ibsen was a man driven on by a frenzy, by the troll-like quality in his nature, and he is infinitely remote from the social propagandist which he appeared to the most intelligent, even, of his contemporaries; and perhaps he is more intelligible to our own discontented age than he was to the happy nineteenth century, in whose image he appears to many to have been moulded, though he loathed it so intensely.

But wonderful as is "The Lady from the Sea," it is probably not his greatest achievement. "The Master Builder," that spiritual autobiography, is more quintessentially Ibsen, and "Little Eyolf" a more triumphant development of his method. Still, the Lady from the Sea herself is the most beautiful individual creation of this monstrous prophet from the snows.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

## FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

IT is difficult to keep one's patience with Mr. Frederick Lonsdale, whose "Spring Cleaning" seems in for a long run at the St. Martin's Theatre. He is evidently a gifted dramatist, possessed of considerable wit, of a pair of wide-open eyes, and of powers of social satire. Unfortunately, he does his best to throw away all his advantages by refusing to be for an instant cynical. A rather silly young woman, bored with her pompous husband, surrounds herself with a number of friends, who, whatever their faults, are at least amusing. The husband, horrified at what is occurring, introduces to one of his wife's dinner parties a golden-hearted woman of the streets. Her clever friends insult the wretched woman to her face, and leave the house deeply shocked. The strange conduct of her husband brings the wife to her senses: they fall, after a painful scene, into each other's arms, and we are informed that in future only bores will be invited to the house. What is the psychology of all this? What can be Mr. Lonsdale's view of the world? Why are only fools nice? Still, a great deal of the play was quite amusing, and it was very well acted. Mr. Ronald Squire was excellent as the cynical lover, and Miss Cathleen Nesbitt gave a magnificent performance of the woman of the streets. Mr. Blakelock deserves credit for his sketch of Bobby Williams, a bright young man from Oxford.

Mr. Jack Hulbert's new revue, "By the Way," at the Apollo, is one of the best I have seen in London for some little time. Mr. Jack Hulbert can give us a good revue because he keeps his ears and his eyes open, and is thus able, unlike most people connected with the stage, to keep up a lively comment on the follies of the age. His sketch of a husband so engrossed in cross-word puzzles that he does not notice that his wife is eloping before his eyes, is particularly entertaining, and several sketches were almost equally good. Unfortunately, we were carried away from the matter in hand by some very tiresome "art tableaux," one recalling painfully the Drury Lane "Midsummer Night's Dream," but presumably the public expects these interludes, and it is useless to complain. In any case, a visit to "By the Way" can be safely recommended to anyone anxious to while away a gloomy evening: and such is the social object of a revue.

It is somewhat of a novelty to see in London an exhibition of modern British painting and sculpture which is not connected with any particular group or society. The exhibition now being held at the Lefevre Galleries can, at any rate, claim this distinction, even if not that of being representative of the best that is being produced in England to-day. If this was its object, there are some sad gaps: it is, however, an interesting collection, and brings into notice certain painters whose work is not very often seen. Mr. S. J. Peploe's "Road near Cassis" is an attractive piece of painting, and it is surprising that the same artist should produce anything so dull and characterless as "North End, Iona." Mr. J. D. Fergusson is another variable painter, sometimes promising, sometimes superficial and insignificant; as a sculptor he is self-conscious, and his formalization is too obvious. Mr. Edward Wolfe has vigour and solidity, but reminds one almost too insistently of Matisse. Of those whose work has been more frequently seen in London, Mr. Paul Nash shows, among other pictures, a good landscape, "Souldern." Mr. F. J. Porter's "Wroxham Bridge" is not a very good example of his work, but his "Still Life" has a fine rich colour. One especially of Mr. Seabrooke's landscapes, "Ile de Levant," is successful. Mr. Dobson shows a fine graceful "Study of a Head" in bronze, Mr. Epstein his accomplished and striking bust of Joseph Conrad. Some pottery also is included in the exhibition.

A memorial exhibition of the work of Odilon Redon is being held at the Leicester Galleries. Redon is a

curious, isolated figure among French artists of the latter half of the nineteenth century. He is at his best when illustrating some macabre or fantastic work of literature, such as Edgar Allan Poe's stories, the "Tentation de Saint Antoine," Huysmans, or the Apocalypse. This side of him is seen here in a large collection of his lithographs, which includes also portraits of the painters Bonnard, Vuillard, and Maurice Denis. There is also a somewhat heterogeneous collection of paintings and pastels, differing widely both in style and subject; there are flower pieces, romantic landscapes, a few portraits, and many pictures such as are commonly described by the conveniently vague word "mystical."

Other exhibitions at present open are that of the Society of Independent Artists, at Messrs. Parsons', 315, Oxford Street, which consists mainly of rather second-rate work of the decorative and illustrative order; and an exhibition of "Paintings of the Tropics and France," by Mr. Gerald Reitlinger, at the Independent Gallery. Mr. Reitlinger's technique is fairly accomplished, but he is perhaps as yet rather immature for a "one-man" exhibition. He is apt to be monotonous, but his work shows considerable promise.

## Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

- Saturday, February 14th. Egon Petri, Pianoforte Recital, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.  
Vivien Hughes, Violin Recital, at 3, at Æolian Hall.  
Sunday, February 15th. Arnold Bennett's "The Bright Island," the Stage Society.  
Indian Play "Nazim," at the Indian Students' Union, at 5.  
Monday, February 16th. Rowena Franklin, Violin Recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.  
Gilbert Bailey, Song Recital, at 8.30, at Æolian Hall.  
Tuesday, February 17th. "Katja the Dancer," at the Gaiety.  
St. John Adcock on "Authors' Luck," Six-Point Lecture, at 5.15, at 92, Victoria Street.  
Wednesday, February 18th. Pirandello's "Henry IV.," the A.D.C., at Cambridge (until February 21st).  
J. S. Owens on "Modern Atmospheric Conditions," at 8, at Royal Society of Arts.  
Baron A. F. Meyendorff on "Travels in the East," at 5.30, at King's College.  
Thursday, February 19th. "Five Minutes Fast," Lena Ashwell Players, at the Century.  
"Hamlet," at the Haymarket.  
Friday, February 20th. "The Grand Duchess," at the Globe.  
Hortense Houghton and Carlo Fortefi, Song Recital, at 8.30, at Æolian Hall.

OMICRON.

## "CATCH."

I KNEW a man a little,  
And liked him a little.  
Suddenly Life alipped something into my hand.  
"Tell him to catch," said Life.  
"But suppose he just stares?" said I.  
"He may," said Life.  
"If it drops I shall look a first-class fool," said I.  
"You will," said Life.  
I threw, and the man caught.  
Now when, occasionally, we meet,  
We say little;  
But in his quiet face  
There is kindness,  
And in mine  
No shame.

I have thrown you something, friend.  
You, friend, have stared.

SUSAN MILES.



## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## THE MIND OF A CHIMPANZEE.

THERE are people who, like the famous Dr. Arnold, regard the animal world as a painful mystery. Its painfulness depends to a large extent upon the nature of our interpretation—it may hurt our human pride—or upon our failure to interpret. But certainly animals are a mystery; and most, if not all, religious, and many philosophical or semi-philosophical systems which profess to explain the universe, seem to me unsatisfactory because they are content to ignore the mysterious existence of all animals other than man. To explain the existence of man without at the same time explaining the existence of the worm and the ass is no explanation at all. Wherever human beings have set themselves seriously to study some department of themselves, they have had to proceed by first studying that department in the animal world; *e.g.*, all our knowledge of the human body is based ultimately on previously acquired knowledge of the bodies of worms, asses, &c.

We know now a great deal about the bodies of worms and asses, we know practically nothing about their minds. It is, indeed, extraordinary how little scientific study there has been, until quite recent years, not only of animal but also of infant and child psychology. A book, however, has just been made available for English readers which contains the record of some extremely important investigations. The Prussian Academy of Sciences founded before the war at Tenerife a station for the observation of apes, and in 1917 Professor W. Köhler, who had held the post of Director, first published the results of his experiments under the title "*Intelligenzprüfung an Anthropoiden*." This book has now been translated into English, and is published in "The International Library of Psychology" under the title "*The Mentality of Apes*," by W. Köhler (Kegan Paul, 16s.). Every serious student of psychology ought to read it, and he should supplement it by reading another book just published in the same series, "*The Growth of the Mind*," by Professor K. Koffka (Kegan Paul, 15s.), for Professor Koffka joins up the results of Köhler's observations of chimpanzees with the results of the study of child-psychology and with the new and important hypothesis of Gestalt-Psychologie.

I am a mere amateur in this subject, but I found Professor Köhler's book fascinating. The animals which he had under observation were nine chimpanzees. He set himself to study the problem of whether they act with insight or intelligently. It is probably true to say that most scientific psychologists hold that animals, other than man, do not behave intelligently; their actions are either reflex or instinctive or unintelligent habits acquired by "trial and error." Köhler's investigations lead him to deny this view; he gives a large number of instances in which, in his opinion, the behaviour of the apes can only be explained on the assumption that they acted with insight.

His experiments had one characteristic of great importance which distinguishes them from nearly all those of previous investigators. His object was to set the ape a problem which was new to him and could be solved intelligently, but which was also extremely simple. The common type of experiment previously made is that of shutting a hungry cat or dog in a complicated cage from which he can only extricate himself by touching a spring, turning a handle, or pulling a string which releases the

lock. Köhler maintains that such experiments are far too complicated and the problems set to the animals much too difficult. The animal, if it was to act intelligently, would have had to have some knowledge of complicated human contrivances, and the problem was therefore from the start not fully comprehensible. Köhler, on the other hand, provided the simplest possible "situation in which the direct way to a goal is barred, but in which an indirect way is left open. The animal is introduced into this situation which has been so planned that it is *fully comprehensible*. The animal is then left to indicate by its behaviour whether or not it can solve the problem by the indirect means that have been provided."

I will give one or two examples. (1) A piece of fruit is placed outside the cage beyond the animal's reach, but a string is attached to it and is within reach of the animal. All the apes solved this problem as soon as it was presented to them, taking hold of the string without hesitation and carefully drawing in the fruit attached to it. The animal never handled the string as if in play or by chance, but always drew it "quite literally with regard to the goal," *i.e.*, it first gave a glance at the goal and drew in the string with its eyes on the goal. A dog was quite unable to solve this problem. (2) A banana is placed outside the cage beyond the animal's reach, but a stick is left in the cage long enough to reach the banana. All the chimpanzees solved this problem. It was often some considerable time before the animal used the stick, but, as soon as it was used, it was picked up suddenly, one end was placed behind the banana, and the banana was pushed within reach. (3) A piece of fruit is hung from the top of the cage out of reach, but a box is left in the cage from which the ape can, if he moves it under the fruit, reach the fruit. This problem was also solved, though in some cases it took a considerable time. What is observable, however, is that when the solution did come, it came with "deliberation"; there was no aimless pushing about of the box until it was by chance moved under the fruit and then used; the box was suddenly seized and dragged under the objective, the animal jumped on to it and took the fruit. Some of the animals subsequently learnt to build three boxes one on the top of the other in order to reach the objective. (4) The fruit is again outside the cage; two bamboo sticks are provided, each too short to reach the fruit, but one stick can be fitted into the other, making a stick long enough to reach the fruit. It was the "cleverest" animal, Sultan, who succeeded in solving this problem.

Köhler's own interpretation that the apes solved these problems, not by chance or instinct, but by intelligence, is disputed by some psychologists. Their arguments are subjected to detailed criticism by Professor Koffka, who agrees with Köhler. It is difficult after reading this criticism, and still more the description of the experiments by Köhler himself, not to conclude that, where the problem is simple, the chimpanzee behaves intelligently. I have not space here to deal with the arguments or with certain conclusions bearing on human psychology which seem to follow. I may add, however, that in an appendix to his book Köhler gives some extraordinarily interesting observations on the general psychology of chimpanzees, particularly with regard to their group feelings.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## "THEY ALL EXIT HURRIEDLY."

**Judas Iscariot.** By E. TEMPLE THURSTON. (Putnam. 3s. 6d.)

**The Vortex.** By NOEL COWARD. (Benn. 5s.)

**The Sisters' Tragedy, and Three Other Plays.** By RICHARD HUGHES. (Heinemann. 6s.)

**The Colonnade.** By STARK YOUNG. (Benn. 3s. 6d.)

**Four Mystical Plays.** By M. CREAGH-HENRY. (S.P.C.K. 3s. 6d.)

**The Pleasure Garden.** By BEATRICE MAYOR. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 3s. 6d.)

THE only common quality discoverable in most of these plays is the lack of style which implies impermanence. "They all exit hurriedly," says one of these dramatists quaintly in a stage-direction, and it seems an appropriate epigraph for modern plays, which are such perishable literary goods.

Mr. Temple Thurston was plainly beset by difficulties when composing his tragedy about Judas Iscariot. There is a strange *pudeur* in modern audiences which makes them dislike direct presentation of religious subjects. They were angry even in Paris when Salome indulged in amorous rhetoric over a dummy head, and they would undoubtedly revolt at the appearance of Christ or God the Father on the stage; though, oddly enough, when faith was strongest these were common figures in religious drama. Mr. Thurston, therefore, had to keep Christ out of his play, as an influence in the background. Then there was that vexed subject of diction—how to obtain the necessary dignity and remoteness and yet not depart too much from contemporary speech. Mr. Thurston's solution is not satisfactory. He favours the inversions and poetic diction so dear to the novelist-journalist. "Always I would have fear of you did I not love you so much"; or "Think you His trial there before Caiaphas means aught but one thing?" The play moves stiffly through obvious situations to a foregone conclusion in a pseudo-Eastern "atmosphere" compounded of "Sumurun" and Biblical quotations. The effect of this sensational and trivial treatment of an august subject is ludicrous; rather like a popular novel-jacket or a cinema "fade-away."

Mr. Noel Coward is sternly realistic and Ibsenish. His characters are the sort of people who live in the more expensive houses of Earl's Court and Kensington, people one would do almost anything to avoid. They chatter through Mr. Coward's play with much the same aimless affectation and malice as in their own houses; they are quite as vapid, futile, and selfish in the play as in life. Mr. Coward's object, therefore, is satire, and he certainly achieves some satirical effects in the earlier part of the play. Types of futility like Pannie and Clara are familiar to most of us. The Sunday-night scene in the country house is presented with every realistic device and modern improvement. The weak portion of the play is the Ibsenish last scene between the selfish mother whose object is to "keep young" and the neurotic son, who is about to addict himself to drugs. The satire ebbs, and the play drifts into the moral problem type.

In "The Sisters' Tragedy" Mr. Richard Hughes leans towards Ibsen; in the "Man Born to be Hanged" towards Synge. "A Comedy of Good and Evil" is a dialect fantasy. "Danger" is an experiment. Mr. Hughes was desired to write a play for the purpose of broadcasting by wireless. He had therefore to compose entirely for the ear, as the cinema playwright composes entirely for the eye. The play is a short affair; three people are exploring a coal-mine when an accident occurs, and their different reactions to the threat of imminent death form the substance of the piece, which has a tragic ending. It is an interesting demonstration of the limits and possibilities of this form of truncated drama. Mr. Hughes is probably right in thinking his "Man Born to be Hanged" an improvement upon the earlier play, "The Sisters' Tragedy"; the more ambitious "Comedy of Good and Evil" is less attractive in print than it might be on the stage.

The author of "The Colonnade," Mr. Stark Young, is an American, and the scene of his drama is laid in one of those aristocratic households which appear to be so

common in the great democracy. The characters show a quantity of culture which is a little dazzling to unaccustomed eyes; one of them is closely acquainted with the works of Michelangelo, and another (or the same) expresses a suspicion that he is spiritually related to Hamlet. The point of the piece is that John Dandridge leaves his stately Southern home, his blooming bride, and aristocratic family because he disagrees with his father about the disposal of part of the Family Estate and because his own personality needs more spacious fields for realization. Mr. Young is quite romantic and poetical:

"JOHN: What a night, my God, what a night! It's incredible. I always forget how beautiful it can be down here. I always know when it's like this that I love my own country best after all, my own South. Look at the moonlight over everything. You could read by it, couldn't you? Over the columns and the stones of the pavement. And out over the garden, Evelyn. It's like a heart beating."

"EVELYN: You can smell the roses; do you smell them?"

"JOHN: Yes. And the jasmine smell is everywhere. And the sound of the water—water and the moon are the most beautiful things in the world. I dreamed once that I was dead and was buried by the light of the moon, and that water was falling from somewhere on my heart and made a sound like the strings of a harp."

The mystical plays by Miss Creagh-Henry deal with religious subjects from the point of view of an ardent English Catholic. They will be most appreciated by those who share most completely the author's convictions. The difficulty of handling this type of play is very great. To come upon the stage-direction: "Enter the Blessed Virgin Mary right with John's arm round her," is at least a little discomposing to a reader. The blank verse which is appropriated to the Angels seems to lack elevation:—

"ANGEL: Stay! For to-night both Heaven and earth rejoice  
To keep the birthday of their Lord and King.  
And since the star shines clearly now for you,  
And you have heard the angels' song of hope  
Which heralds forth the news that Christ is born,  
Are not your hearts afire to worship him?"

Mrs. Mayor's "The Pleasure Garden" is in a different category. It is a genuine fantasy, filled with sharp observation of character and a sense of the numberless little tragedies which are continually occurring to the ordinary people round us. Mrs. Mayor avoids the mere realism and problem touch of Mr. Coward; she removes her play from plain actuality by making her characters typical and allegorical; and she avoids the sort of absurdities Mr. Thurston falls into owing to a keen sense of humour and a literary skill which is superior to sensationalism. Her play must be judged as a work of art. It is intensely alive, but it is a good deal more than a photographic or phonographic record of life. The people who live and suffer in her Pleasure Garden drift about in an apparently aimless and dreamlike way, but the exposition of their personalities and concealed tragedies is always sharp on the point. The play is a series of interlinked episodes and not a single action brought to a climax. There is a pungent bitterness in this author's pessimism which many will find stimulating.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

## CHINA AND AFRICA.

**The Inconstancy of Madam Ohuang, and other Stories from the Chinese.** Translated by E. B. HOWELL. (Werner Laurie. 10s. 6d.)

**Black Laughter.** By LLEWELYN POWYS. (Grant Richards 6s.)

THERE is probably nothing more difficult for anyone brought up in one civilization to appreciate than the popular tales of another. For in these the differences in custom and ways of thought are set down with nothing to explain them, no indication of an underlying principle which would make them comprehensible, nothing but the inexplicable and arbitrary fact. The stories which Mr. Howell has collected are, by all the signs, popular tales. Like our own, they are wish-fulfillments in the Freudian sense: the widow who protests too much that she will never marry again, and breaks her word, is taught a lesson; virtue is rewarded and vice punished. That is easy enough to understand: the sole difficulty of an occidental is that he cannot always



comprehend why the Chinese virtues should be called virtues; yet on some ground there must be as much justification for them as there is for the virtues of Europe. As Mr. Howell leaves him, the reader is like a child who is told by his elders that such and such an act is good, and such another bad, but who does not know why they are called good or bad, these being occult, almost magical terms whose meaning is possessed only by adults. So when one finds that it is admirable for a Chinese magistrate to bribe the head jailor to set an innocent prisoner free, and for a Benevolent Sage to rip up the body of a bad old woman and tear out her entrails with his hands, one is at a loss; yet to the Chinese reader, one must suppose, the rightness of these actions is self-evident.

There is a second difficulty. In a picture of life so uniformly quaint, everything has for us a touch of comedy, and it actually becomes hard to discern what is intended for comedy, and what is not. It may be, however, that this difficulty is accentuated by Mr. Howell's very peculiar English. Why he should use so persistently such words as "really" and "indeed," why he should scatter marks of exclamation everywhere without apparent reason, it is hard to say. "At the age of sixty a man loses his vitality as a rule! This is indeed a case of a rotten tree putting forth blossoms! Who knows where this young bastard has come from? There's no blood of my father in him! He shall never be recognized as a brother by me!" And so on through almost the entire volume. It would be impossible to recognize even a masterpiece behind this barrage. But these stories are by no means masterpieces; they are singularly uninteresting. By far the most piquant pages are those which contain Mr. Howell's notes on Chinese customs. One learns from these that drunkenness is not a social offence in China, that a square-faced man is considered beautiful, and that large ears portend good luck. But here again the translator gives us no reasons in support of these interesting, and it may be valid, points of view. If one did not know already that the Chinese are a great and wise people, one would never learn it from this volume.

With all its faults, Mr. Llewelyn Powys's study of primeval Africa is a remarkable book. Its chief fault is licence of diction: the author rarely uses one word where three can be used. But allowing for this fault, which time should correct, he writes vividly and at times magnificently. His lions, leopards, and hippopotami are observed with truly fearful exactitude, and rendered with that realism of horror in which objects appear at once incredible and intensely actual. The swarming animal and plant life of East Africa is put before our eyes by a man who can scarcely believe in their reality, and this gives his descriptions a strangely poetic atmosphere, which is most authentic where he poetizes least and is most realistic. Moreover, the things he writes about are so portentous that he has but to articulate them to make them appear fabulous. For its realism alone—and absolute realism is by no means easy to achieve, especially when one is describing things so strange—the book would be remarkable. But Mr. Powys's realism is, moreover, that of a rare mood in which objects take on a heightened reality: it is realism touched and illumined by an overmastering emotion. The book has many faults: the language is persistently over-ornate, the horror at times overstrained, the reflection frequently trite. In form it is a record mainly of life on a sheep farm. But it is in reality an imaginative picture of wild Africa so vivid as to give the reader a physical shock.

EDWIN MUIR.

#### AN HEIR TO THE REVOLUTION.

**The Life and Memoirs of Count Molé (1781-1855).** Edited by the MARQUIS DE NOAILLES and translated by ARTHUR CHAMBERS. Vols. I. and II. (Hutchinson, 18s. each.)

THESE are the first two volumes of the translation of Count Molé's memoirs, of which Volume III. (in French) has already been reviewed in this journal. They are well worth reading for anyone interested in the historical development of the French people, though less for what they say than for what they imply, and as a detailed picture of a man typical of his generation. Count Molé is often spiteful and sometimes witty, but he does not pretend to be a stylist, while a lot of space is taken up with debates in the Chamber, which

are not particularly exciting reading. But he is interesting because he was so thoroughly an heir to the Revolution, though he took a long time coming into his inheritance. It may even be said it took three hundred years of French history to hoist the Molé family to the top of the tree, and rather an unromantic tree, too—the Premiership under Louis Philippe.

Molé came of a distinguished legal family, natives of Troyes, which had endowed France since the fifteenth century with an unending line of magistrates. The first of the line was Guillaume Molé, who in 1429 chased the English out of Troyes, the town in which Henry V., after Agincourt, was married to the heiress of France. A later, Edouard, negotiated the abjuration of Henry IV., and when the League sought to transfer the crown to a daughter of Philip II. was the leader of organized civil resistance. The most famous of all was his son, the great Mathieu Molé, supporter at once of the rights of the Parlement against the King and the King against the Fronde. Mathieu François Molé, grandfather of our friend, was Premier Président du Parlement de Paris from 1757 to the *coup d'état* and the summoning of the *Parlement Maupeou*. Thus the Molés were distinguished representatives of the intellectual middle class, opposed by social position and legal eminence to the excesses of the *ancien régime*, and waiting for a change to come into their own.

When, however, the change came, the Molé family did not immediately reap the profits. The father of Comte Molé was killed during the Terror, and the son was in consequence always frightened of Liberty. He grew up to manhood an over-serious youth, who had never known high spirits or abandonment, a perfect specimen of that superficial respectability which was a natural reaction against the jolly light-heartedness which had ended in the revolution. At an age when other boys were running after dancing-girls he produced his "*Essais de Morale et de Politique*," a volume full of sterile reflection, which earned him the applause of all contemporary wiseacres. Intelligent, hardworking, and well-informed, more interested in safety than experiment, he was a man after Napoleon's heart. Napoleon did much for him, and would have done more (some of the best pages in Volume I. consist of his accounts of *Napoléon intime*), but the cautious *bourgeois* had learned from his childhood the advantages of never quite burning one's boats. To do him justice, he never quite abandoned Napoleon either. Still, he was chilly during the "Hundred Days," with the result that when Napoleon was finally packed off to St. Helena, Louis XVIII. was as anxious to employ him as ever was Napoleon.

So after all these vicissitudes we find him, at the age of thirty-four, a kind of secret adviser to the Restoration. In Volume III. he will be for a short time in office, but he is still not quite at home. Under Louis XVIII. he is left-centre, and definitely in opposition under Charles X. The fact is that the reaction had gone just a little too far for Molé, as it had done for the rest of France. But when Charles X. in turn took his last slow and dismal journey to the coast and the revolution became "stabilized" under the pear-shaped King, Molé found himself at length in the very middle of the scene. Through how much he had gone to get there! He had weathered every storm of excitement before his ship eventually sailed into the blessed haven of dullness.

His Premiership was a masterpiece. An inch to the right or an inch to the left and all was over. His majority was rarely more than eight. Yet he kept going for nearly three years (September, 1836-March, 1839). Then, though Molé remained sound as a rock, dullness got unfashionable again. "*La France s'ennuie*": and frenzy ruled once more. Universal suffrage and things even Robespierre had not dreamed—Socialism, Louis Blanc, Proudhon, and what-not—reigned for a day, till all crashed in a first-rate massacre, which reduced the Terror to pigmy proportions. Molé just lived to see Napoleon III., and the end of that Parliamentary Government of which he had been such a master. If only he could have lived till 1870, when respectability came once more into favour, he might have had an apotheosis. As it was, he died at a moment when people cared for none of these things.

Molé himself never budged. By the time he was twenty his mind was formed. He served many masters, but he said

the same thing to each of them. No one was ever less an adventurer or a charlatan. And he can hardly be blamed for being a bit of a time-server. Men he knew well, and thoroughly disliked. It is of Napoleon that he speaks with most affection, and of Talleyrand with the most engaging malice. Volume II. gives an excellent picture of him. At the age of thirty-three Molé was sufficiently secure to begin falling in love, in which alone he showed a certain recklessness, and he writes of it without hypocrisy or exaggeration. He hated certain types of sentimentality, and had no use for either Benjamin Constant or Madame de Staël, preferring the Duke of Wellington to either. There was "no nonsense" about the Duke, just as there was no nonsense about Molé or Louis Philippe, or the very limited franchise of which both were in favour. Unfortunately, the human race loves nonsense, and hence Molé passed his childhood in a dungeon and his old age in obscurity. One can love the *via media* too well. Perhaps, for all its virtues, the career of Count Molé should be read by statesmen more as a warning than an example.

### CARTOONS OF THE PASSION.

**Figures of the Passion of Our Lord.** By GABRIEL MIRÓ. Translated from the Spanish by C. J. HOGARTH. (Guy Chapman. 12s. 6d.)

A book so coloured with beauty and loaded with horror as this one is could only be the fruit of a Latin mind. To the Northerner it may seem an impertinence to take the bare, sufficient outline of the Gospel narratives and paint in, with exaggerated meticulousness, the last detail of realism. Loftily, we prefer to trust our own imaginations. The result is that the Passion of Our Lord has, through the ages, become refined almost to a symbol: we gloss over the suffering and concentrate upon the ideal of sacrifice. That is not the Latin way: and Señor Miró is a true child of Spain. With an amazing insight he retells the story of the Passion, shirking nothing and glossing nothing that his vivid imagination has seen, but piling it all, prodigally, recklessly, into his narrative, until we cry out for respite from his hurting realism. The incident of the Crucifixion, as he tells it, is so naked and terrible in its detail that it is almost more than we can bear: only the lovely epilogue that follows, cooling our heat under the palms by Jacob's Well, while the cicalas chirrup and the bullocks go creaking by, makes it possible.

Señor Miró's method has been to take a dozen or so of the figures of the Passion and, by sketching the part played by each figure, to gather up at the same time his or her life-story. Always in the background is the figure of Jesus. Now it is Pilate we are studying, or Judas, or Herod, or Caiaphas, or The Young Man Who Cast Away His Vesture, or Barabbas, or Simon of Cyrene: and always, with no little ingenuity, we are shown how his life came to impinge on that of Jesus. The effect is cumulative, therefore, and, when the moment of crucifixion itself is reached, we are so intimate with the actors, so familiar with the system that made such ghastly machinery possible, that each detail goes to the quick with enforced emphasis. Thus the Passion is treated as of dramatic and human significance: we feel as if we were present at the most painful moment of all history rather than at the willing sacrifice of the Son of God. Our senses are stretched mercilessly upon the rack: but our religious susceptibilities remain as they were. We understand Pilate's every action; we are compassionate with the outraged motherhood of Mary; we comprehend even the atrocities of Herod: but of the divine majesty and loneliness of Jesus, of the piercing intent of the cry "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" we have no enlarged understanding. We are concerned only with the story of the death of Jesus the man.

That is what makes the horror of Señor Miró's narrative so unmitigated. Not all his loaded detail of beauty, not all the heavy colour and scent of his background of a Palestine spring, can avail us when we come before the broken and bleeding figure on the Cross. It is significant, too, that the very last words in the book are the forlorn cry of the woman of Samaria, "O Rabbi, O Rabbi! Wherefore didst Thou rise again but to ascend into Heaven?" It is the human

cry of despair, of defeat. It is as if the Latin mind stopped short at the Crucifixion, forgetting that it was only the means towards the Resurrection.

Señor Miró has, we must suppose, been extremely fortunate in his translator. We are unfamiliar with the original; but Mr. Hogarth's prose marches to a music that is sonorous and strong:—

"Everywhere men seemed to be crossing and recrossing one another amid shadows projected from flickering, flaring torches which crackled as though caught within their ignition were the very scented vapours of Gethsemane, whilst the distorted shadows of two mules ridden by Scribes went gliding along the ancient walls of the enclosure, and all the trees of the Garden seemed to recoil backwards, and to fall prone upon the terraces."

Quotation, however, from such a book is useless: even a column could convey no adequate impression of the accumulated effect of such a glowing, palpitating work. The manner of the translation was particularly important, since the colour and the music of the thing are essentially one with the matter. Señor Miró views the Crucifixion as Brangwyn views it, in his flaming, dramatic cartoon; and it is testimony to his sureness of touch that only once in the whole work does he play with melodrama. The pity is, from the reader's point of view, that that one occasion occurs in the first section of the book: we refer to the conventional construction that has been put upon the character of Judas.

Señor Miró dedicates his work to "the Mother who has so often related to me the story of the Passion." It has obviously been one to him with the air he breathed: and now, with immense learning and lively imagination, he has put that story into one of the most ornate books of our time.

### TRANSLATIONS OF THE CLASSICS.

**The Works of Aristotle.** Translated into English under the Editorship of W. D. ROSS. Vol. XI. *Rhetorica.* By W. RHYS ROBERTS. *De Rhetorica ad Alexandrum.* By E. S. FORSTER. *De Poetica.* By INGRAM BYWATER. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 15s.)

**The Loeb Classical Library.** Homer, *The Iliad.* Vol. I. By A. T. MURRAY. Plato, Vol. IV. *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, and Euthydemus.* By W. R. M. LAMB. *Procepius.* Vol. IV. By H. B. DEWING. *The Geography of Strabo.* Vol. III. By H. L. JONES. *Dio's Roman History.* Vol. VII. By EARNEST CARY. *Lucretius, De Rerum Natura.* By W. H. D. ROUSE. (Heinemann. 10s. each volume.)

**Martial's Epigrams. Translations and Imitations.** By A. L. FRANCIS and H. F. TATUM. (Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.)

THE student of Aristotle owes a very large debt to Mr. Ross, and happily it goes on mounting up. The other day we drew attention to his magnificent edition of the "Metaphysics." Now we have to thank him for a new volume in the complete "Oxford Translation of Aristotle" which he is editing. The translation, when completed, will consist of eleven volumes, and the volume under review is the eleventh and last, but that does not mean that the work of the translators has been finished. At present six complete volumes have been published, and also parts of three other volumes. When it is completed the whole edition will be a very fine achievement. Mr. Rhys Roberts, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Bywater, who are responsible for the translations in Volume XI, have done their work well. They contrive to keep close to the Greek and yet to produce comparatively readable English—a very difficult task in the case of Aristotle.

The new batch of Loeb "Classics" is full of interest. The three classical classics, the Homer, the Plato, and the Lucretius, have all found famous translators before—Lang, Leaf, and Myers; Jowett; Munro. But they are all worth doing again. Professor A. T. Murray attempts to give "due regard to the emphasis attaching to the arrangement of words in the original," an attempt which distinguishes his translation from those of his predecessors. Mr. Lamb's four Platonic dialogues are accurate and graceful. It is not easy to judge any translation of Lucretius without prejudice, if one has been brought up on the great Munro. Good though Dr. Rouse's is, it has not the curious and slightly twisted style with which Munro seemed to catch something of Lucretius's peculiar style. Of the three more recondite





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volumes, Dio is perhaps the most interesting: Volume VII. contains what remains of his Books LVI.-LX., which cover the period A.D. 9 to A.D. 46. The Strabo contains Books VI. and VII. of the Geography, and the Procopius Books VI. and VII. of "The Gothic Wars."

Mr. Francis and Mr. Tatum have attacked Martial from a rather different angle, for they attempt to reclothe him in English verse. The task is one of immense difficulty, and the translators have perhaps achieved as much as could be expected. But in translating a writer like Martial to miss by a hair's-breadth is even more than a mile. For instance, we open Martial at random and read:—

"Inscripit tumulis septem scelerata virorum  
'Se fecisse' Chloe. Quid pote simplicius?"

which is translated by Mr. Francis and Mr. Tatum:—

"Chloe seven husbands had deprived of life  
And on each tombstone to their memory  
'My handiwork,' she wrote. O wicked wife!  
O sweet simplicity!"

It is, of course, a question of taste, but all the point of the Latin elegiac seems to us to have evaporated in the English quatrain.

#### PROCRUSTES IN THE SCHOOLROOM.

An Essay towards a Philosophy of Education. By CHARLOTTE M. MASON. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.)

IN the Middle Ages people had very little knowledge of the workings of the human body. The circulation of the blood, the action of the lungs, the nervous system, the processes of generation were all complete mysteries. So long as the functions necessary to life and health could be carried on by Nature unaided, this ignorance was, of course, immaterial; but directly health was menaced or broke down difficulties arose. Medical advisers had no means of knowing whether a sufferer was bewitched, poisoned, or suffering from appendicitis. Unaided by diagnosis, their treatment was necessarily empirical. They were obliged simply to try various experiments in the desperate hope that something would cure the patient before death supervened; they naturally began with methods that had traditionally been successful in like cases, before going on to original and more doubtful inventions. It is true that a great deal of medicine is still empirical, but not all; and as a delightful consequence it is no longer essential to wrap a fever patient in scarlet flannel, to gather plants for the pharmacopœia by the light of the waxing moon, or to concoct drugs from animal excrements.

Teachers, alas! have not yet emerged into the dim twilight realm of doctors. The workings of the human mind are unknown to us, though it is possible that we may be on the verge of important discoveries. At present we are groping in a fog; and if some of us are timidly clinging to the coat-tails of the last member of a long procession, determined to err, if we must err, in company of as many as possible, others are dashing away from the beaten tracks enthusiastically certain that whatever is, is wrong.

After all, however little we know of psychology and child psychology, we must act. Children must be taught. The law insists upon it, and there is a general agreement that education is desirable. But how and what to teach are mysteries on which there is at present no consensus of opinion.

Medicine, in her period of darkness, sometimes attempted to simplify her difficulties by the discovery of a panacea. Mistletoe or the great valerian would cure any person of any disease—or if not one of these, doubtless such a plant might be found, if sought for with sufficient care. The same tendency is very visible among educational reformers to-day. Eurhythmics, a Montessori method, a Dalton plan, a Dramatic method, a Play Way, the Classics on the direct method—any one of these is claimed by its founder as the one and only way to teach, and often resorted to by the miserable student in the delusive hope that it will make a good teacher of a bad one.

Miss Charlotte M. Mason was the happy discoverer of such a method. She had found out *how to teach*, and fortunately the system could be applied in every kind of school, elementary, secondary, or continuation, and by every kind of teacher, trained or untrained, class-teacher,

governess, or parent. The children have merely to read a page or a chapter *once* and then narrate it. This will teach history, geography, science, composition, modern languages, ethics, and spelling. All that is necessary is to make the right selection of books; the selection was formerly made for all children taught on this method by Miss Mason herself, and is no doubt now done by the staff of the House of Education at Ambleside.

Such is the kernel of the education of which we now have the philosophy. It is curious and interesting to see how the idea is extended to studies where reading and narrating might seem inapplicable. We are told, for instance, how to teach art. "Children should have their artistic powers cultivated, especially those who have such powers, but *how*, is the question . . . children should learn pictures, line by line, group by group, by reading, not books, but pictures themselves. . . . After a short story of the artist's life and a few sympathetic words about his trees or his skies, his river paths or his figures, the little pictures [reproductions] are studied one at a time. . . . Then the picture is turned over and the children tell what they have seen—a dog driving a flock of sheep along a road, but nobody with the dog. Ah, there is a boy lying down by the stream drinking. . . ." and so on.

Mathematics is a harder nut to crack with the tongs of reading and narrating. It is clear that Miss Mason was not interested in this subject, and hardly believed that other people were. Her suggestion as to its place in the continuation school is illuminating: ". . . so much has been done in the elementary school already that probably the keeping of fictitious account books would be sufficient exercise for young people who show some mathematical talent."

The fact is that Miss Mason was, above all, an enthusiast for literature, and no doubt she herself, like so many educational prophets and reformers, produced by her method wonderful results. But that it should be *the* way to teach for all teachers, all children, all schools; that in this way and this way alone are we to find educational salvation, is preposterous. Not this bed, nor any other in the dormitory of Professor Procrustes, is the one on which to seek repose. The mere fact that we receive so many pressing invitations to sink down upon one or other of them is merely a sign that the science of education has not yet been born.

#### ART BOOKS.

John Constable the Painter. By E. V. LUCAS. (Hulton & Truscott Smith. £3 3s.)

Francisco de Goya. By AUGUST L. MAYER. (Dent. £3 3s.)  
Ancient Egyptian Works of Art. By ARTHUR WEIGALL. (Fisher Unwin. £3 3s.)

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Herr August Mayer's book on Goya is also excellent of its kind, and has been well translated into English by Mr. Robert West. It has a very large number of illustrations, not only of his paintings—portraits innumerable, identified and unidentified, religious, historical, and allegorical subjects—but also of his drawings, lithographs, and etchings,



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"Ancient Egyptian Works of Art" is an excellent guide to a general study of Egyptian sculpture and painting. It takes the form of an elaborately illustrated catalogue of Egyptian art, chronologically arranged according to Dynasties, and giving a very clear idea of developments and influences. Mr. Weigall has collected about five hundred photographs, mostly of sculpture. Each is discussed shortly. There is also a short note on each dynasty, and a very brief introduction to the book, in which the author tells us that its object is to convince people that Egyptian sculpture and painting produced valuable works of art and not merely archaeological curios—a thesis which should scarcely need proving. Otherwise there is no letterpress; the photographs, well taken and well selected, are allowed to speak for themselves. Mr. Weigall, the author, has held positions under the Antiquities Department of the Egyptian Government and in the Cairo Museum.

"The Quest of the Antique" is not a promising title: it is too suggestive of drawing-room bric-à-brac and little tables covered with curios. Mrs. Willoughby Hodgson, however, seems to know her subjects, although her writing is spoilt by over-picturesqueness. Her book, as she announces in her preface, is to "encourage . . . that ever-increasing class who love 'old things,'" and does not profess to be a guide to connoisseurs. It is a curious mixture, but not the less entertaining for that, for Mrs. Hodgson includes among the "old things" she writes about many less hackneyed subjects, such as a Queen Anne doll's house, wigs, shoes, and corsets, lace samplers, ornaments of the Victorian Era, teapots, &c., and there are chapters on Vauxhall Gardens, old recipes, and Mid-Victorian Pastimes. The book contains many pleasant illustrations.

"Modern and Contemporary Czech Art" deals with Czech painting, sculpture, and architecture from the year 1848, which, according to the authors, was the year of its birth, till the present day. During all that time Czech art has had to assert itself (so we are informed in the preface) against Austrian domination and prejudice, and now that Czechoslovakia is an independent State it seems that its art has to assert itself even more determinedly, with all the self-conscious nationalism of a new-born people. It is only fair to say that (in the case of the painting) it is quite impossible to judge of a scarcely known art from a number of uncoloured photographic reproductions, but Czechoslovakia does not seem, as far as one can tell, to have produced during this period any outstandingly great or original figure, either in painting, or yet in architecture or sculpture. Competent craftsmen some of them may have been, but even the best of their work bears the stamp of imitation, whether it be from Corot, Cézanne, Whistler, or Rodin.

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and delightfully pretty idol of her day," who seems to have been the first and last person to discover "a lurking love of mischief" in Wordsworth's patriarchal austerity, made the earliest contribution to the small book with its binding of green tooled morocco. That was in 1830; and few of the illustrious men and women who visited Rydal Mount during the next seventeen years failed, before leaving, to inscribe for Dora a few verses or lines.

Around the still famous or now half-forgotten names recalled by a perusal of the album, Mr. Morley has allowed his discursive fancy to weave a pleasant medley of information, anecdote, and impressionism. He quotes freely, but with discrimination, from the well-known biographies and correspondence of Wordsworth's friends and associates, and, though he has little that is new to tell us about the poet's relationships with them, he has so arranged his matter that, with the aid of his own descriptive charm, it gives us a fresh and convincing glimpse into the intimacies of Wordsworth's life, when he not only relied increasingly upon Dora for his domestic comforts, but "tried strenuously to recapture, in her companionship, the eyes and ears which Dorothy had given to him many years before." The Wordsworths, however, did not always remain in the seclusion of Rydal Mount; and Mr. Morley is never happier than when he is following them upon one of their occasional tours to London or Scotland. When such excursions were undertaken, it seems that Dora's album was one of the main articles of luggage. For the family travelled light, in an open carriage with one horse, driven by Dora—a horse so faultlessly "steady" that it had difficulty in keeping up with its master, who preferred to walk.

If, however, Mr. Morley's volume is rich in quiet humour, the shadow of pathos is constantly thrown across its pages by the figure of Dora herself, whose long-deferred marriage to Edward Quillinan was followed within six years by her death from tuberculosis, "the mysterious ailment" which had always threatened her. She died, at the age of forty-three, in 1847. Occasional entries were made in her album after her death, the last but one being written by Matthew Arnold in 1850.

#### ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

"THE LETTERS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY TO A. P. SINNETT" (Fisher Unwin. 21s.) is a companion volume to "Mahatma Letters," which was published last year. The book throws a good deal of light upon the Theosophical Movement and its founders. Among other biographical books "Turf Memories of Sixty Years," by Alexander Scott (Hutchinson. 18s.), contains reminiscences of racing in the 'sixties and 'seventies of last century. Mr. John C. Goodwin, a prolific writer on crime and criminals, has gone a little way out of his beaten track in "Queer Fish" (Hutchinson. 18s.), and tells us stories of odd characters whom he has met, on the shadier side of London life, "the good, the not-so-good, and the good-for nothing." "Under Sail," by Felix Reisenberg, with an Introduction by David W. Bone (Cape. 12s. 6d.), is a new edition—revised, with two new chapters—of the book which describes Captain Reisenberg's voyage in the *A. J. Fuller*. In "The Miracle of Fleet Street" (Labour Publishing Co. 2s.) Mr. George Lansbury tells the story of "The Daily Herald." Many people who knew the late Professor A. V. Dicey will be interested in "Memorials of Albert Venn Dicey," edited by Robert S. Rait (Macmillan. 12s. 6d.)

Messrs. Nash & Grayson publish a translation of Señor Ibañez's now famous book on the King of Spain, a book which there appear to have been considerable efforts on the part of unknown people to suppress. It is called "Alfonso XIII. Unmasked," by Vicente Blasco Ibañez (3s. 6d.). In "Fighting the World, the Struggle for Peace," by Count Michael Karolyi (Kegan Paul. 21s.), Count Karolyi gives the reminiscences of his own life down to the moment when, after the October Revolution in Hungary, he formed his Ministry, but, in doing so, he naturally throws light upon some of the most controversial points in Hungarian politics. "The Reign of Leopold II., King of the Belgians," by D. C. Boulger (Ardenne), is a work in two volumes which was mainly written before 1914. "The



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Three new volumes have appeared in the series "Our Debt to Greece and Rome" (Harrap. 5s. each). They are: "Mythology," by Jane Harrison; "Stoicism and Its Influence," by R. M. Wenley; and "Architecture," by Alfred Mansfield Brooks. Another interesting book on a classical subject, recently published, is "Greek Athletics," by F. A. Wright (Cape. 4s. 6d.).

"Sāsānian Coins," by Furdoonjee D. J. Paruck (Luzac. 25s.), gives the results of an exhaustive study of Sāsānian coins, and is fully illustrated with plates.

Messrs. Williams & Norgate publish a new, revised, and enlarged edition of the well-known book "The Antiquity of Man," by Sir Arthur Keith (2 vols. 25s.).

"The English Catalogue of Books for 1924" ("Publishers' Circular." 15s.) is the eighty-eighth annual issue of this invaluable list of books published in the United Kingdom.

"Browning's Ring and the Book as a Connected Narrative," by Alexander Haddow (Blackie. 3s. 6d.), tells the story of Browning's poem in prose, but with frequent quotation from the poem itself.

## NOVELS IN BRIEF

**They Green Stones.** By C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

In style this story of the Cornish Downs has a distinct charm, due to the flavour of dialect and to the picturesque description, but the suspicion aroused in the first chapter that Mrs. Dawson-Scott is constructing rather than observing the folk of the Duchy, quickly becomes a certainty as the plot reveals itself. Malachi, an old sweetheart of Pamela, returns from the Front to find that she has been recently married to Rhod. In a dispute on the doorstep of the farm house, he accidentally kills her husband. Cowed by fears of discovery, she consents to his plan of impersonating the dead man, and they bury the body under the hearthstone. Their words and actions on the night of the fatality can only be accounted for on the supposition of complete shock, and, unfortunately, we do not meet them again, but learn from hearsay that, some years later, they emigrated. Apart from the incredibility of such impersonation (even in wartime and in the loneliest of places), it is difficult to discover the motive of the story. It would seem to be a study in that convention of primitive emotion popularized by Knut Hamsun, if one may depend on passing argument in the book.

**Miss Tiverton Goes Out.** (Arrowsmith. 7s. 6d.)

In this second novel the anonymous writer of "The House Made with Hands" shows again a subtle touch and charm. Miss Tiverton is a fascinating character, the most convincing "old maid" we have ever met, perhaps, though we must hastily add with little irony that she never appears actually on the scene, but exists for us in the resentment of her next-door neighbours, in the wonder of the small child Juliet, and by the visitations of her large, well-nourished black cat, whose eloquence at midnight started a suburban war of great length. This reticent, suggestive method is made more remarkable by the surrounding lack of economy, by what may be styled the delicate effusiveness of the book. The childhood and schooldays of Juliet are described with a wealth of industrious detail which may be excusable; since in dropped hint, wonder, silence, and invisible opposition, the old woman in the dark, shabby house takes on an overwhelming personality, which renders the harassed father of a family almost insane, but, curiously, as the story tells, sweetens with pity and fancy the nature of a young girl.

**Nancy's Heart.** By H. R. D. MAY. (Selwyn & Blount. 7s. 6d.)

Much of this novel might be mistaken for chapters from one of those absorbing serials which appear in periodicals devoted exclusively to schoolgirls. Nancy, an imaginative, large-eyed child, falls in love with the grown-up Clara. We are given a very detailed description of Nancy's growth; under such circumstances it is unfortunate that she should have developed into an insipid and mouse-like creature completely under the domination of her friend. The embittered, disappointed Clara compels much more interest and, to some extent, sympathy. The friendship is naturally opposed by Nancy's parents, who worry a great deal over it, and by a boy friend, Colin. Finally Clara and Nancy run away to

London in order to join the suffragette movement, and, having broken their first windows, get into prison. In a rather silly climax, Nancy is rescued from her friend by the determined action of Colin, home on leave from the Front; and by the connivance of her parents, they are swiftly married, and so the baneful influence is broken. The same theme has been handled recently by Mr. Douglas Goldring, and, no doubt, the "problem" has become familiar.

**Ransom.** By ANTHONY RICHARDSON. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)

James Brockenholt, a great power in the business world, feared and respected by many men, had, in matters beyond the dictaphone, the heart of a boy. He had never forgotten the fact that his old school had expelled him for kissing a barmaid, and we find him, bitter in spirit, publicly welcomed by the headmaster as a great benefactor, and at night sobbing over his initials cut long ago on a desk in the deserted classroom. Being so emotionally ripe, we are hardly surprised to find the magnate casting aside his mistress Sophie, and singing beneath the window of the innocent Isabel that affecting air, "O Honey, when the silver moon is gleaming." The first happy months of marriage quickly passed, and James, brooding like a "Satanic guardian angel" over his treasure, fell once more, in his truculent innocence, into the pathetic silken nets of Sophie. The temperamental misunderstanding between Brockenholt and his wife, so impossible, so easily to be remedied, is convincing enough, and the fading of romance into bitter reality is tragic; but the Byronic gloom of this master of men, brutal in strength and tender and spoiled in heart, can hardly be taken seriously; there is altogether too much chiaroscuro in his character.

**Deep Currents.** By A. FIELDING. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

"All things are possible in Asia Minor," says Mr. Fielding, whose actual knowledge of the East seems equal to his imaginative exploration of mystic regions similar to those discovered by Sir Rider Haggard in Africa. Mithraic influences, the Peacock King, a Sacred Valley, religious sects whose adherents are murderous ruffians and devil-worshippers, the horrible convents of the Bees, in which an ancient religion of Amazons is practised with blood-sacrifice—here is a jumble of myth and custom that reads like a dreadful insane version of "The Golden Bough," and is calculated at least to thrill. Jocelyn, a charming English girl, with, unfortunately, the birthmark of the Bee on her arm, disappears. Captain Talbot and Arkwright set out, in disguise, to trace her. All three are involved in terrible adventures, and from secret ledges in underground temples we witness ancient rites of initiation and sacrifice. The suggested romantic triangle is solved in surprising fashion. Madame Berthe the Frenchwoman, Hott the Albanian mountaineer pledged, by blood-feud, to avenge his brother, and poor Ayesha, the dumb girl, are really vivid characters. If Mr. Fielding's view of Asia Minor be accepted, the Mesopotamian "muddle" can be thrice forgiven.

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

**Garden Improvement.** By T. G. W. HENSLOW. (Dean, 15s.)

This is a sister book to Mr. Henslow's other two books which have been noticed in these columns, "Garden Construction" and "Garden Development." The line between "development" and "improvement" is rather thin, and there is a certain amount of repetition in the third volume, e.g., Mr. Henslow repeats in Chapter IX, "The Carnation Garden," of "Garden Improvement," what he told us happened to him in the grass garden of Messrs. James MacDonald & Sons, in Chapter VIII, "The Carnation Garden," of "Garden Development." However, the book contains an immense amount of information which will be useful to the gardener. This is particularly true of the lists of plants which are given at the end of the chapters, for instance, the lists of lilies at the end of the "Bulb Garden" chapter.

**An Anthology of Sleep.** By CATHERINE ALISON PHILLIPS. (Guy Chapman. 6s.)

This book is first, as all anthologies should be, beautifully printed and bound. The object is stated by the compiler to be "to suggest some of the varied aspects under which sleep has been described in literature,—and chiefly by the classical and English poets." She begins almost with an apology for producing an anthology, but the best defence of anthologies is the fact that, seeing one on the table, we can never resist the impulse to read it. And how can one stop reading an anthology which begins, even before the title page, with "To keep our eyes open longer were but to act our *Antipodēs*. The huntsmen are up in *America*, and they are already past their first sleep in *Persia*!"



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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## CONVERSION—TOBACCOS—BREWERIES.

THE Stock Exchange during the present account has been quiet, but the underlying tendency is quite firm. Any appreciable fall has in general brought in buyers, and some markets have shown good rises, particularly in tobaccos and oils. Conversion  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. has been the outstanding feature in the gilt-edged market. Last year its highest price was 80 $\frac{3}{4}$ , and its lowest 74 $\frac{1}{4}$ . This year it has risen from 77 $\frac{1}{4}$ , and at the time of writing is 79 $\frac{1}{4}$ . This stock goes "ex" on February 23rd, so that it is now "full of dividend," but even allowing for this factor, it will not be surprising if any further rise—say one or two points—is followed by another conversion scheme. About £8,000,000 of National War Bonds (2nd Series) fall due at the beginning of April, but apart from this small amount it must be expected that the Treasury will miss no opportunity of funding successive slices of 5 per cent. War Loan at a lower rate of interest. This prospect is already having an effect (wholly satisfactory from the point of view of the Treasury) in tempting not only charitable institutions and trustees, but even industrial companies (in whose case the advantages must surely be problematic), to prefer long-dated and irredeemable to short-dated and intermediate Government stocks.

While 1924 has been disappointing for the major industries of this country—coal, iron and steel, ship-building—investors have fared well in the industries concerned with two of our chief articles of consumption—tobacco and beer. When everything else is dull, tobacco shares continue to be a firm market. For an investment it has not been wrong for some years to make a purchase of such leaders in the industrial market as Imperial Tobacco or British American Tobacco. Even the conventional rule of avoiding a purchase after a rise has only held good for very short periods in the case of these two companies. The table of the highest and lowest prices of the leading tobacco companies over the last three years should be compared with the statement of profits following:—

		1922.	1923.	1924.	To-day.	Yield.
Imperial Tobacco	H.	74/6	93/6	88/-		
	L.	49/-	65/9	66/6	91/6	4 18 0 (free)
British American Tobacco	H.	92/6	110/7 $\frac{1}{2}$	115/-		
	L.	59/3	83/9	96/6	109/6	4 16 0 (free)
Imperial Tobacco (Canada)	H.	24/10	26/10	28/9		
	L.	17/1	21/6	23/1 $\frac{1}{2}$	27/9	5 5 0 (allowing for exchange)
United Tobacco (South) Ltd.	H.	47/-	63/9	87/-		
	L.	28/9	42/-	56/10	90/-	5 11 0
Carreras Limited	H.	47/9	82/6	12 11-16		
	L.	17/6	40/-	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 19 6 (on basis of 50% free)

		1922.	1923.	1924.
Imperial Tobacco	Net Profits ...	£7,199,077	£7,474,687	£8,368,060
Yr. to Oct. 31	Dividends ...	22 $\frac{1}{2}$ % free	20% free	22 $\frac{1}{2}$ % free
British American	Net Profits ...	£4,400,753	£4,494,971	£4,866,265
Yr. to Sept. 30	Dividends ...	25% free	25% free	26 $\frac{1}{2}$ % free
Imperial Tobacco (Canada)	Net Profits ...	£746,091	£672,210	£740,164
Yr. to Sept. 30	Dividends ...	7%	7%	7%
United Tobacco S.	Net Profits ...	£488,751	£508,945	£622,684
Yr. to Sept. 30	Dividends ...	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	20%	25%
Carreras	Net Profits ...	£35,197	£181,963	£473,828
Yr. to Oct. 31	Dividends ...	15% free	20% free plus 5% bonus	50% free and Scrip Bonus 100%

The Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain and Ireland) has just published its accounts. The position disclosed is very strong, even among tobacco companies. For the last four years the chief items in the balance sheet appear as follows:—

	Investments in Associated Cos.*	Cash.	Gilt-edged Securities.	Reserve Funds.
1921 ...	£5,538,318	£3,223,297	£1,045,667	£11,774,323
1922 ...	6,017,612	4,716,365	1,019,416	12,000,000
1923 ...	6,056,331	4,951,208	6,079,262	15,000,000
1924 ...	6,222,028	3,173,961	12,122,262	5,500,000

\* Market value of these investments is greatly in excess of book values.

† £7,439,039 taken out of Reserve Funds, and one in three Ord. Shares allotted as bonus.

One of the curious things about the Imperial Tobacco balance sheet is that the item of "goodwill and patent rights" remains consistently at £9,422,581. No doubt the directors have good reason for keeping this item in the balance sheet at that figure. It is difficult to obtain information about the affairs of this great undertaking. Monopolists naturally tend to maintain discreet reticence about their affairs. As long as profits continue to show a steady increase, while cash or gilt-edged securities leap upwards by millions, shareholders will be satisfied to receive their dividends in silence, aided in their complaisance by the well-founded expectation of bonuses in the future.

The rise in brewery shares over the past twelve months has been considerable. Watney Combe Deferred shares, for instance, rose from 206 in June, 1924, to 251 $\frac{1}{2}$  in September. In October a capital bonus of 50 per cent. was declared, and the Deferred shares are now 220. Mitchells & Butlers Ordinary shares rose from 29s. 6d. in June to 37s. 6d. in September, and are now 45s. Bass, Ratcliff & Gretton were 32s. 6d. in June, 42s. 6d. in September, and are now 50s. The rise in profits of these concerns for the periods to June of the last three years is shown in the following table:—

	1921-22.	1922-23.	1923-24.
Bass, Ratcliff & Gretton ...	£466,863	£470,023	£543,858
Div.	11% free	11% free	13% free
Mitchells & Butlers, Ltd....	£412,801	£404,471	£414,433
Div.	10%	10%	10% free
Watney, Combe, Reid ...	£770,411	£845,986	£857,176
Div.	32% and Cap. Bonus of 100%	16%	20% and Cap. Bonus of 50%

Mitchells is the only one of these three that has increased its interim dividend in respect of the current year.

Whether brewery companies will proportionately make such good profits in the current year is doubtful, having regard to the fact that their large stocks of cheap barley are nearly exhausted, and the price of barley has risen greatly in consequence of a poor harvest. It should not be overlooked that in cases where bonus shares are distributed, brewery companies are in general giving back to shareholders what was taken away in lean years when capital was written down. The latest example of this is the City of London Brewery Company, whose shares have had a spectacular rise from 42s. 6d. in June last to 50s. in September, and thence to 77s., when a capital bonus was declared at the end of January. We find that this company's issued capital was increased from £562,500 in 1860 in various stages to £1,500,570 in 1897, and that in 1914 the capital was reduced to £872,192 by cancelling 1,500 Ordinary shares disclaimed in bankruptcy and by writing off 70 per cent. from the Ordinary stock. The Preference shareholders at the same time gave up arrears of interest. The capital was increased to £1,089,672 in 1920. It now becomes £1,556,926. The new issue of three 6 per cent. non-cumulative Preference shares for every four Ordinary shares held, which was passed at the general meeting held on February 6th, helps to make good that loss suffered by the ordinary shareholders, while the issue to preference shareholders of one new 6 per cent. non-cumulative Preference share for each £20 preference stock held was, as the Chairman said, "a little recognition of the sacrifices made in 1914 in giving up arrears of interest—a sacrifice which was exceedingly valuable to the ordinary shareholders of that day." The present price of the Ordinary shares is 75s. cum rights and cum dividend of 3s., less tax.

The City of London is exceptional among brewery companies in that it possesses a valuable investment outside the brewing industry. In 1922 it transferred its brewing operations to Fulham, and its old City brewery,



## COMPANY MEETING.

## LLOYDS BANK LTD.

THE Sixty-seventh Ordinary General Meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited was held on February 6th, at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C. Mr. J. Beaumont Pease, chairman of the Bank, was unable to be present on account of indisposition, and the speech, which he had prepared was read by the Deputy Chairman, Sir Austin E. Harris, K.B.E., who presided. Mr. Pease's speech was as follows:—

In reviewing the events of the past year the matter of chief importance to ourselves is the Balance Sheet and Report, which to-day we present to you, and in them I think you will find indications of the general trend of events. May I ask you to consider them with me for a moment?

Our deposits remain at practically the same figure of £340,000,000, and the acceptances show an increase of £3,500,000, but the chief alterations in our figures are to be found on the other side of the Balance Sheet. In common with other banks, our advances show a marked increase. In our case it is no less than £23,300,000, and the proportion of our advances to deposits has risen in the year from 41.6 per cent. to 48.2 per cent.

Large as is this increase, the proportion is still considerably below that which ruled in the years before the War. It may be interesting to you to be reminded that the highest point reached in the four years commencing with 1911 was 59 per cent., 59.6 per cent., 60.3 per cent., and 58 per cent., respectively. There is a considerable way, therefore, yet to go before we reach pre-war proportions, and in my opinion we are justified in assuming that we are in a position to meet any demands for financial assistance which increased activity in trade is likely to make upon us. None the less, the increase shown last year is considerable and is largely responsible for the fact that we have been able to earn greater profits. If we take the figures of the last three years we see that our advances have increased from £123,000,000 to £184,000,000, a rise of no less than £41,000,000, while our deposits have increased to the extent of £10,000,000. To provide the wherewithal to meet the increased accommodation to the public during last year we have realized investments to the extent of £22,000,000, and have let our bills run off to the extent of £10,500,000. These realisations, together with our increased deposits, have enabled us not only to find the money necessary to meet increased demands for advances, but also to increase our cash to the extent of nearly £4,000,000 and our cash at call to the extent of nearly £6,000,000.

The result has been, as I have already stated, that our profits are larger, as we have employed our money more profitably, and the profit figure we present to you to-day exceeds that of last year by £421,800.

## PROFIT AND LOSS.

You will have seen from the Report our proposals as to the distribution of our profits. We have at our disposition a figure of £2,972,857 15s. 2d., which includes the sum of £503,923 0s. 5d. brought forward from the previous year. The interim dividend absorbed £928,253 8s. 2d., we have placed £250,000 to Bank Premises Account, £250,000 to the Staff Superannuation Fund, and £100,000 to the Staff Widows and Orphans Fund. The final dividend which we now recommend amounts to £928,253 8s. 2d., and we shall have left over to be carried to the new account £516,350 18s. 10d., some £12,000 more than we brought in.

## THE DAWES REPORT.

The Dawes Report was produced on April 10th and accepted by the Reparations Commission. In July the London Conference succeeded in establishing a harmony which had long ceased to exist between the Allies, adopted the recommendations, and set up a series of mixed committees to carry them into effect. On the one hand it is feared that, without a complete moratorium of several years for Germany, even after due allowance has been made for the effect of the German loan, which was an integral part of the scheme, it may break down in the initial stages. On the other hand, the natural prejudice against a loan to an ex-enemy was combined with the fear lest a rehabilitated Germany would constitute a serious competitive menace to our own industrialists. Time alone will show whether the experts erred on the side of optimism in believing that, with the proceeds of the loan and the interest on German railway bonds, &c., Germany would be able to meet the cost of the armies of occupation, deliveries in kind, and similar liabilities, without encroaching on any revenue from the ordinary budget in the first two years. But even if this does not prove to be possible it should not necessarily involve the breakdown of the whole scheme, for there is a provision against the possibility of a default arising, if it is unavoidable and not due to bad faith on the part of Germany. In regard to the other criticism, the public of all the allied

nations took a broad, and I believe a statesmanlike, view. They argued, as the experts themselves have stated, that "the reconstruction of Germany is not an end in itself. It is only part of the larger problem of the reconstruction of Europe," and the issue of the loan was a triumphant success.

## BRITISH TRADE AND POSSIBLE COMPETITION.

At home also we have seen various favourable features. 130,000 persons formerly unemployed have last year found work, and this increase to the ranks of the employed follows after the larger figure of the previous year of 300,000. It has been computed that, at the modest valuation of their production at £4 a week, this means that the country is adding to the national income at the rate of about £100,000,000 a year, as compared with the position two years ago. You have seen the increased figures of the loans to trade by this and other banks, and the discount houses report a much larger proportion of commercial bills in their portfolios, while the London Bankers' Clearing House discloses an expansion of £2,600,000,000 in its turnover.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGES.

I have already mentioned the stabilization of German currency which is one of the objects of the Dawes scheme, and the question generally of exchanges has been a matter of special interest during last year. Fluctuations and uncertainty in exchanges, in spite of the assistance which banks give in their forward exchange operations with the object of preventing speculation in exchanges, are among the chief obstacles to a recovery of international trade, and important steps have been taken recently to minimize this serious disadvantage.

## THE GOLD STANDARD.

We have noticed the improvements not only in Germany, but also in Hungary, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, and Greece in this respect, and steps have been taken to tie up their currencies to gold. South Africa has decided that gold payments will be resumed after June, while Australia is contemplating a similar step. Sweden, Switzerland, and the Netherlands appear to be only waiting for a signal from England to resume definitely the gold standard, while the approach of sterling to within 2 per cent. of parity, and the expiration this year in England of the embargo on the export of gold, have prepared the country for our returning to our well-tried and ancient policy.

There is no effective rival of any standard or consequence. Gold is almost universally recognized as the only practical international measure of values, and the only real problem for us is the precise date when we can safely re-establish a free market in gold. England has frequently shown that she is not without courage in facing her economic problems, and there are indications that a bold policy would not be lacking in success.

I cannot conclude without alluding to the fact that this is the first time we have met in London for our Annual Meeting. I indicated last year that, in spite of the feelings of sentiment attaching to the City of our birth, we felt that, in the interest of convenience and economy to the business, it was desirable that the Annual Meeting should take place in London.

The Deputy Chairman, continuing, said: This ends the Chairman's speech. I have only one matter which I desire to mention, and that is the question of Bank Premises. You will notice that in the Balance Sheet this item stands at £5,445,000 as against £5,065,000 last year, and this figure is arrived at after the allocation of £250,000 from Profit and Loss. This is a large increase, but a great proportion of it is in connection with the fine premises in Pall Mall which were taken over by us in an incomplete state when we acquired the business of Cox & Co., and which have been occupied by us during the past year. They constitute possibly the finest banking premises in London, and we hope that the large expenditure in this respect will prove justified.

After negotiations which have spread over many years we are now approaching the commencement of the rebuilding of our new Head Office and City Office in Lombard Street. Only a few details still remain to be agreed before the work is actually put in hand, but we can now look forward to occupying at no great distance of time a new building which will occupy one of the finest square sites in the City.

I now beg to move: "That the Report just taken as read be received and adopted, and that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Directors therein, a dividend for the half-year ended December 31st last of 1s. 8d. per share, being at the rate of 16½ per cent. per annum on the paid-up capital of the Company, be declared, such dividend to be payable on and after February 7th, less income tax."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

which occupies nearly two acres adjoining Cannon Street Station, was converted into riverside wharves. This subsidiary business is run by the City & Continental Wharves & Transport Co., in which the City of London Brewery has a controlling interest. Apart from its Fulham Brewery, the company also holds a controlling interest in two brewery companies—Stansfeld & Co., of Fulham, and Nalder & Collyer's Brewery Co., of Croydon. The gross revenue from the City of London's "holding" interests appears to be increasing more rapidly than its gross revenue from its own brewery. The total net profits of the company in the last three years (ending December 31st) have been £168,814, £176,610, and £234,842. In view of its subsidiary interest in Thameside Wharves the City of London may conceivably earn better profits this year, despite the uncertain outlook for the brewing industry as a whole, which makes caution advisable in purchasing brewery shares at present prices.

### THE GAS LIGHT & COKE COMPANY.

**A** PUBLIC utility concern which can pay its shareholders well, in addition to serving the public fairly and efficiently, is the Gas Light and Coke Co. If anyone imagines that a gas undertaking is bound to be replaced by electricity, he will profit by reading the Chairman's speech at the company's general meeting on the 6th of this month. The Gas Light and Coke Co. apparently produces as much energy (light, heat, and power) in a year as is produced in the form of electricity by the whole of the electrical undertakings of Great Britain. If the latter were to replace the former they would require, as the Chairman said last year, to use at least 3,000,000 tons of coal instead of the 2,000,000 now used by the Gas Light and Coke Co. Further, in the production of electricity the 3,000,000 tons of coal would be completely used up, while the Gas Company, having treated its 2,000,000 tons and obtained the gas therefrom, would still have remaining 1,250,000 tons of coke and breeze, 19-20,000,000 gallons of tar and a large quantity of ammonia. The coke has a commercial value as a smokeless fuel, while the crude tar produces road tars, dyestuffs, creosote, and benzol motor spirit (of which there is a great shortage in the country). That, we take it, is sufficient assurance of the continued expansion of the industry. Incidentally, the Gas Light and Coke Co. is so placed that the more London is darkened by fogs, the more gas is consumed for lighting, while the more fogs are abolished by the disuse of burning coal, the more gas is consumed for heating. Last year the sale of gas by this company showed an increase of 6½ per cent., following on one of 5 per cent. for 1923 and one of 8 per cent. for 1922. Last year was, in fact, a record year, and December 10th was a record day, with a sale of 166,000,000 cubic feet of gas, beating the record day in 1923 by 9,000,000 cubic feet. After all, the continued increase in the use of gas is not to be wondered at, seeing that it remains a cheaper source of domestic heat than electricity. Last year the Gas Light and Coke Co.'s income from gas, namely, £6,279,608, was, on account of the increase in sales, practically the same as the year before, although the price of gas was lower. The rentals from meters, stoves, and fittings showed an increase of about £80,000, and the revenue from the sales of coke and breeze an increase of £230,000, but there was a falling off in the revenue from tar and ammoniacal liquor, making the net increase in revenue from residual products only £42,000. Heavy capital expenditure had to be incurred on new mains, offices and showrooms, and new meters to keep up with the expansion of business, so that the company had in cash and on deposit £567,000, as compared with cash and investments of £1,244,000 last year. The following

table will show comparative results of the last three years:—

	1924	1923	1922
	£	£	£
Net Profit	1,168,794	1,156,592	1,294,037
Dividends on Ordinary Stock	5 6 8	5 5 4	5 4 0
Carried Forward	223,583	227,295	244,355
Reserve Fund	133,908	118,977	93,424
Special Purpose Fund	485,238	471,002	457,184
Depreciation A/c	114,210	109,881	105,679
Sale of Gas	6,279,608	6,281,392	7,488,848
Gas sold (thousands cu. ft.)	36,504,917	33,411,955	32,313,544

The issued capital of the Company amounts to £23,122,249, divided into:—

£16,460,014	4 per cent. Standard Ordinary Stock.
£2,600,000	¾ per cent. Maximum Stock.
£4,062,235	4 per cent. Consolidated Pref. Stock.

The dividends for the year are much the same as a year ago, namely at £4, £3 10s. and £5 6s. 8d. per cent. on the Pref., Maximum, and Ordinary stocks; the transfer of £40,000 to the Redemption Fund is the same, but nothing is placed to reserve, while the amount carried forward is reduced from £227,295 to £223,583.

The dividends on the ordinary shares of the company are regulated by the standard price of gas fixed by the Board of Trade. The standard price is the price at which the company is entitled to pay a 4 per cent. dividend. The present standard price is 11d. per therm. The dividend is increased or decreased by 2s. 8d. per cent. as the price of gas falls or rises from the standard price by each .2 or one-fifth of a penny per therm. At the present selling price of 8.6d. per therm, the company will be entitled to pay a dividend of £5 6s. 8d. The present price of the Ordinary Stock is about 97, and if a dividend of £5 6s. 8d. is paid this year as last, the stock will yield approximately £5 10s. 0d. per cent.

### CHILEAN SECURITIES.

**M**ANY British investors include a small proportion of Chilean Government securities in their lists. For this course there are two very excellent reasons. Firstly, interest yields are fairly good, and, secondly, the present financial and commercial ties between Chile and Great Britain have been placed on a firm basis, mainly as a result of the enlightened methods adopted in the past by traders, British and Chilean alike.

Chile has had her full share of national vicissitudes. The country has suffered from wars, both internal and external, and from severe earthquakes. Yet, in spite of these setbacks, it has been able to develop along commercially sound lines, and was, in fact, recently enabled to balance its budget. In the world of trade Chile is the second largest producer of copper, while the agricultural industries are well developed. But by far the most important commercial asset which the country possesses is the large natural deposits of nitrate, which are found in the desert tracts of Tarapaca and Antofagasta. The value of the nitrate industry to the Chilean Government will be the more readily realized when it is mentioned that the Administration derives between 70 and 80 per cent. of its total revenues from the duties on nitrate sales. In the 1925 Budget, for instance, the estimated yield of the nitrate export duties is actually put at \$77½ millions, in addition to nearly \$8 millions to be received on account of sales of nitrate ground.

The total foreign debt of the country as at the end of 1923 amounted to about \$441 millions gold, and the internal debt to \$154½ millions gold and \$231½ millions paper. The par value of the Chilean gold dollar is 1s. 6d. Of its external borrowings, in all, twenty-one loans are quoted on the London Stock Exchange. Details of the principal of these issues, showing latest prices and



## SOUTH METROPOLITAN GAS COMPANY.

The ordinary general meeting of the South Metropolitan Gas Co. was held on Wednesday, February 11th, at the Cannon Street Hotel, E.C.

Dr. Charles Carpenter, M.Inst.C.E. (the Chairman), in the course of his speech, said: It is with pardonable pride that, in presenting the report for 1924, I associate with it a reference to the fact that the past year was the centenary of our existence as a gas undertaking. It is also pleasing to record that, while "Failure of electric light" is quite a common headline nowadays, even where its generation is in municipal hands, gas supply goes on uninterruptedly. (Hear, hear.) Indeed, had its discovery followed, instead of preceding, that of electricity, it might to-day enjoy a reputation in respect of the conservation of coal and the distribution of its energy to which it is fairly entitled, but which is very often withheld. An increase of over 6 per cent. in our sales of gas during the twelve months surely justifies such optimism, for, as I have upon more than one occasion pointed out, this increase would in itself be enough to supply many a provincial town of considerable importance. There is another point that is frequently overlooked, even by those in authority, and this is that when electricity is the particular form of energy needed in industry or business it can frequently be generated more economically on the spot with gas engines than purchased through the public suppliers. I recently visited one such installation using our gas, where the plant was on a scale large enough to supply the wants of places as large as, say, Bognor, Cromer, Teignmouth, or Whitstable, and which was giving every satisfaction.

Now, behind all this development in an area the boundaries of which have not been extended for over forty years, and supplying much of the material for it, has been our research department. Many years ago a careful consideration of the position satisfied us that, if the fullest use of the possibilities of gas supply were to be made, improvements would have to be forthcoming in its economic and convenient utilisation. A public that had been once content with the replenishments of candle sockets, the trimming of lamps, and the tending of coal stoves and fires, would not expect to be required to extend that attitude to their gas appliances, and we then commenced the task which we have ever since continued of improving and supplying these. The progress we have made has not only largely contributed to our increase of business, but has placed before manufacturers, not always sympathetic to our ideals, examples of higher standards than those to which they had grown accustomed. The difference in aim will be easily understood when it is remembered that, while our business is to extend the use of gas, theirs is to increase the sale of fittings.

I pass from this matter to the question of the supply of coal—our all-essential and important raw material. We want clean coal and cheap coal if we are successfully to carry on our undertaking. This necessity is paramount. How are we to achieve it? It is our very life-blood and upon it depends our vitality, and, indeed, our existence. Well, the very last thing that as large users of coal we want to see come about is the nationalisation of the mines. (Hear, hear.) If such an ill-conceived proposal were ever put into effect, it would mean "good-bye" to cheap and efficient coal production. The whole country would suffer from the inefficiency and insufficiency of a bureaucratic parasitical organism drawing a maximum of self-nourishment from the community and yielding a minimum of efficiency. Most of us had some experience of governmental management during the late War, when, but for the efforts of private manufacturers, the country would have cut a sorry figure indeed. That there were abuses is undoubted, but these themselves not infrequently originated with governmental control, and the blame of accepting temptations to costliness which emanated from those in authority must not wholly rest upon the manufacturer. Be this as it may, and speaking with great deliberation on the part of this Company, I repeat that the last burden we are anxious to bear is a nationalized coal supply. Neither have we any desire to be required to obtain our supplies from a huge organization or federation of the whole or part of the mining industry. As in all other industries, different conditions and methods of labour and efficiency pertain not only to individual areas but to different mines. And we should view with dismay and alarm proposals whereby the economies pertaining to some were cast into a common melting-pot where good and bad material would be inextricably mingled, standards of comparisons lost sight of, and the stimulus of competitive working, more necessary than ever in internal application to the industries of this country, denied its fullest expression.

The crying need of the consumer to-day is for free markets within the land. If, owing to high costs or low returns, a mine ceases to be profitably worked, surely it should be closed down unless local conditions can be adjusted to meet its exigencies. But the pernicious proposal of "robbing Peter to pay Paul," by bolstering up the inefficient by the better working of the efficient, can only lead to disaster, in which the community as a whole would be the sufferer. One of the defects of the labour system of to-day is its organization into more or less water-tight compartments. The corrective for unemployment in the coal industry should be extended employment in another needing development; in other words, that the underground unemployed might turn their hands to work above. I have emphasized, but none too strongly, the need of the community for cheap coal, and in pointing out what appears to me to be the evils of nationalization, it must not be supposed that I regard the present organisation of our mining methods as perfect.

The imperative demand of to-day is the adoption of the co-partnership principle in the mining industry. The employees would then feel they had an interest other than as mere wage-earners in the industry with which they were associated, and a spirit of pride in their employment, an emulation in efficiency thereby being engendered, having a quality of the kind which has been so clearly expressed in our own case for over one-third of a century. I believe the employers as a whole would be sympathetic. I believe their fear is in the attitude thereto of the unions, who seem at times to put their faith in the sword rather than in the olive-branch. Many years ago this Company was fought by the Union on the subject of the continuance or the abolition of co-partnership, and upon nothing else. Since then the relations of employers and employed have been characterized by peace and contentment, happiness and efficiency. Will never the truth become known or accepted that there is no valid reason why the blessings enjoyed by the gas consumer should not be extended a preceding stage, namely, to the coal user? I have observed from time to time prominent persons, generally political, sometimes academic, at times even aristocratic, announcing their association with an organization promoted for the purpose of furthering the ideals of labour. May I offer the suggestion that if they would but join the South Metropolitan Company's partnership, they would have a splendid opportunity of becoming acquainted at first hand, if not with the labour problem, at any rate with its solution?

As regards the working results of the year, these have proved disappointing. Success largely depends upon the closeness with which coal costs are approached by residual values. The latter, however, slumped much sooner than the price of coal fell, and we have had to dip very deeply into the balance brought forward from the last account. Whether the average price at which we can buy coal for the current year will enable us to balance the deficiency is uncertain, and, furthermore, the problem of cheap gas supply is not helped by the upward tendency of wages generally. But whatever happens, I can assure the dweller or worker in South London that he need not be made anxious by alarmist headlines on contents bills of "London in darkness"; he may continue to rely upon his supply of lighting gas.

In connection with the price of gas, there is a very important matter of policy which I must introduce at this stage. Now, two courses are open to us. Since we cannot depend upon the cost of coal, or labour, or the values of residuals remaining at a constant figure year after year, we must choose one of two alternatives. The first is to charge a level price for gas, high enough when times are good to recoup losses when times are bad. This method covers up, if I may say so, the necessity for announcing from time to time changes in the price of gas, either down or up as the case may be, the latter occasion being, of course, unpopular with the consumer. The other policy is always to work with as little margin as possible, even though this course necessitates the unpleasant need from time to time of increasing price. We have adopted for many years the latter course in all our dealings with the public, and we believe that it is in the long run in its best interests. With rapidly accumulating funds in hand there would perhaps be a tendency to examine expenditure less critically than when our requirements for labour or materials are more closely provided, and although at times we may have to incur the criticism attaching to an announcement of an increase in the price of gas, I believe most of our consumers have understood our policy in the matter, and that it was dictated by their interests.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted, and at an extraordinary meeting the proprietors approved a Bill now before Parliament with the object of effecting working arrangements with other undertakings by mutual agreement.

the return per cent. to the investor (the yields include profit or loss on redemption), are given hereunder:—

Stock.	Redeemable.	Price.	Yield %
			£ s. d.
4½%, 1886 ... ..	1936 ...	89 ...	5 18 6
4½%, 1887 ... ..	1935 ...	91 ...	5 14 9
4½%, 1889 ... ..	1942 ...	90 ...	5 9 3
5%, 1892 ... ..	1940 ...	90 ...	6 1 0
4½%, 1895 ... ..	1943 ...	85 ...	6 0 0
5%, 1896 ... ..	1944 ...	91 ...	5 16 0
5%, 1905 ... ..	1944 ...	88 ...	6 2 0
4½% Gold Loan, 1906 ...	1931 ...	97 ...	5 2 0
5% Bonds, 1909 ... ..	1957 ...	87 ...	5 18 3
5% Loan, 1910 ... ..	1946 ...	88 ...	6 0 9
5% Loan, 1911 (1st Series) ...	1947 ...	87 ...	6 2 0
5% Loan, 1911 (2nd Series) ...	1948 ...	88 ...	5 19 9
5% Series "A" ... ..	1940 ...	88 ...	6 5 6
5% Ann. Series "B" ... ..	1941 ...	88 ...	6 4 6
5% Ann. Series "C" ... ..	1942 ...	88 ...	6 3 0
7½% Loan, 1922 ... ..	1956 ...	104 ...	7 3 0
8% Loan, 1922 ... ..	1952 ...	107 ...	7 7 9

The present total of the loans outstanding and quoted on the Stock Exchange is nearly £28 millions, but it should be noted that the process of redemption is automatically carried on in accordance with the conditions governing the issue of nearly all borrowings. The original amount of these loans was in excess of £43½ millions; thus Chile is to be congratulated on its steady and progressive policy of debt redemption. The largest of these loans is the 5 per cent. issue of 1911, the total amount outstanding of both series being about £6½ millions; the smallest is the 4½ per cent. loan of 1887, which now totals less than half-a-million, although the original amount placed in London was more than £6 millions.

Coupons on the majority of the issues are payable at Messrs. Rothschilds', who have for many years been closely associated with the Treasury of the Chilean Government. Most coupons are due in January and July of each year. Those on the 4½ per cents. of 1906 and the 4½ per cents. of 1895 are payable in April and October; on the 5 per cents. of 1910 in June and December, and on the 5 per cents. of 1911 in May and November. The latest date for the redemption of any of the loans is 1957; this is in the case of the 5 per cent. Bonds of 1909, which yield at the present price £5 18s. 3d. if allowance is made for profit on redemption, or a flat rate of £5 15s. if no such profit is included. Here is an additional profit of £13 per cent., which profit at present escapes income tax. The 8 per cents. of 1922 were issued in exchange for 5 per cent. Debentures of the Chilean Transandine Railway Company.

### THE GOLD POINTS.

**M**ESSRS. SAMUEL MONTAGU & CO., the Bullion Brokers, have recently published in their weekly letter a most interesting calculation as to the difference between the rate of dollar exchange at which gold would be exported from London in the event of a free gold market, and that at which it would be imported. The calculation is as follows:—

"The points when free gold movements become practical by the removal of the prohibition upon exports of gold will be as follows (allowing for freight and insurance rates now ruling and for ten days' loss of interest at 4 per cent. while in transit, and for petty expenses):—

London to New York ...	\$4.8567 per £
New York to London ...	\$4.8961 per £

"The price above calculated as paid for gold to New York is 77s. 9d. the standard ounce—round about which figure gold used to be obtainable in pre-war times. As, however, it is possible that gold might not, in the new conditions, be readily obtainable except at about the equivalent of the bullion value of sovereigns (paid out by the Bank of England against notes), and as these coins would probably not be new, but of current weight,

say two or three per mille under the mint weight, their cost as bullion would be equal to about 78s. 0½d. per standard ounce, and the gold point for London to New York would in that event be about \$4.837."

This means that even if the embargo were removed the exchange might quite well remain as low as 4.84 on the assumptions made by Messrs. Montagu. On the other hand the rate would have to approach 4.90 before it would pay to ship gold to London. Since the question of a return to a gold standard came within the region of practical politics a good many people have been wondering what the gold points would probably be under post-war conditions. We have reason, therefore, to be grateful to Messrs. Montagu for an authoritative estimate.

### YIELDS OF GILT-EDGED SECURITIES.

**T**HE following table is designed to show the net yield for the leading securities on the gilt-edged market in a more informative way than in the usual lists.

The investor has four things to consider: (1) The flat rate of interest yield, i.e., the percentage that the annual interest bears to the purchase price; (2) the profit or loss on redemption; (3) the amount of accrued interest included in the purchase price; (4) the effect of income tax. Since income tax (and super-tax) are payable on the flat yield and not on the yield allowing for loss (or profit) on redemption, the deduction of income tax affects more adversely those securities on which the flat yield exceeds the yield allowing for redemption, and more favourably those on which the flat yield is less than the yield allowing for redemption.

In the following table, therefore, we give in three columns (1) the flat yield, (2) the yield allowing for accrued interest and loss (or profit) on redemption, and (3) the net yield after deduction of income tax. It is the figure in the last of the three columns that generally matters to the average investor, although he often attends only to the figure in the first column.

	Opening Prices 11 Feb. 1925	Gross Flat Yield £ s. d.	Yield allowing for accrued interest and loss or profit on redemption								
			Gross			Net after deducting Income Tax					
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Long-dated Securities—</i>											
3½% Local Loans ... ..	67½	4 9 4	4	9	4	4	9	9	3	9	7
3½% Conversion Loan (1961 or after)	79½	4 8 7	4	8	7	4	9	6	3	9	4
4% Victory Bonds (1976)	93½	4 5 7	4	5	7	4	9	0	3	9	5
4% Funding Loan (1960-90)	90½	4 8 10	4	8	10	4	10	3	3	10	1
<i>Intermediate Securities—</i>											
5% War Loan (1929-47) ...	101½	4 18 5	4	18	5	4	15	4	3	13	1
4½% Conversion Loan (1940-44)	97½	4 12 6	4	12	6	4	14	9	3	13	11
<i>Short-dated Securities—</i>											
3½% War Loan (1925-28)	96½	3 12 10	3	12	10	4	16	9	4	0	4
5% National War Bonds (1927)	105½	4 14 5	4	14	5	4	8	5	3	7	2
4% National War Bonds (1927)	99½	4 0 1	4	0	1	—	—	—	4	1	0
5½% Treasury Bonds, A & B (1929)	102½	5 7 0	5	7	0	4	14	7	3	10	7
5½% Treasury Bonds, C (1930)	103	5 6 10	5	6	10	4	17	0	3	13	0
5% Treasury Bonds, D (1927)	100½	4 19 5	4	19	5	4	14	0	3	11	8
4½% Treasury Bonds (1930-32)	99½	4 10 9	4	10	9	4	12	11	3	12	6
4% Treasury Bonds (1931-33)	94	4 5 1	4	5	1	4	18	0	3	18	10
<i>Miscellaneous—</i>											
India 3½% (1931 or after)	69½	5 0 8	5	0	8	5	1	3	3	18	6
Commonwealth of Australia 4½% (1940-60) ...	97½	4 17 3	4	17	3	4	18	10	3	16	8
Sudan 4% Gtd. 1950-74 ...	88½	4 10 8	4	10	8	4	16	6	3	14	9
Gt. Western 4% Debs. ...	86	4 13 1	4	13	1	4	13	5	3	12	5
L. & N.E.R. 1st 4% Pf.	80½	4 19 1	4	19	1	5	1	7	3	18	9



## THE GAS LIGHT & COKE COMPANY.

THE Two Hundred and Eighteenth Ordinary General Meeting of the Proprietors of The Gas Light and Coke Company was held on February 6th. Mr. D. Milne Watson (the Governor of the Company) presided. The Secretary read the notice convening the meeting. The report and accounts were taken as read.

The Chairman said:

### SATISFACTORY INCREASE IN BUSINESS.

Business during the past year has been very satisfactory. We have had an increase in output of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., which represents in a Company of this magnitude a very large additional quantity of gas sold.

We have spent a large sum of money on Capital Account, viz., £616,000. Of this, £122,000 was for land, £100,000 for buildings and machinery in extension of Works, £145,000 for additional mains and service pipes, £72,000 for new meters, and £177,000 for new stoves.

The land was acquired for extension of works and new premises for district offices and showrooms, necessary owing to the enormous increase in our business in the last few years. For the same reason we were compelled to spend large sums on new mains and services and new meters required by an ever-increasing number of consumers. Additional stoves have had to be provided to satisfy the demand brought about by the extension of heating and cooking in all our districts. Against this expenditure of £616,000 we have written off £70,000.

Coal cost us more in 1924 than in 1923. There was a small increase in the price, but the greater part of the additional expenditure of £250,000 was due to the larger quantity consumed owing to the increase in business.

Oil also cost us more for the same reason.

### KEEPING ABREAST OF IMPROVEMENTS.

You will observe that there has been a considerable advance in the expenditure on repairing and renewing stoves. This is due to the policy of steadily eliminating the old-fashioned types of cookers and fires and bringing them up-to-date.

In other directions also the Directors are taking steps to keep the Company abreast of all modern improvements.

Under the heading of Co-partnership there is an increase of expenditure owing to the larger number of Co-partners and to a somewhat higher bonus for the year.

On the other side of the Account, the income for gas, viz., £6,279,608, is practically the same as the year before, although the price of gas over the year 1924 was lower than in 1923. This is due, of course, to the increase in the sale of gas.

The Company realised £230,000 more from the sale of Coke and Breeze than in the previous year, but unfortunately this was counterbalanced to a large extent by a falling off in the revenue from Tar and Ammoniacal Liquor. I regret to say that the future outlook in the Residual Market is far from good and we shall have to face a large decrease in revenue from this source.

The net result of the year's working enables us to pay the dividend (of 5 1-3 per cent.) we are entitled to under the sliding scale and to carry forward £223,000.

As mentioned, the Company has had an increase in business of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. This represents a quantity of over 2,000 million cubic feet, or 10 million therms, equal to the total requirements of a town as large as Portsmouth or Brighton for a year.

### STRIKING PROGRESS IN THE GAS INDUSTRY.

You will understand how extraordinarily alive the gas business is in London when I tell you we had a record year for total sales of gas and also a record day's output on December 10th, when we sold 166 million cubic feet of gas.

Considering the progress of this Company and other Gas Undertakings, it is strange to find that there are many people who still think that the days of gas are numbered.

It is difficult to account for this belief. It may possibly be due to the fact that gas as a means of lighting is not so much in evidence to-day as it was in the past, the result being that the casual observer may get the impression that gas is disappearing altogether. How many people realise that the wonderful lighting in Whitehall and many parts of the West End is done by gas and that this Company alone lights no less than 1,000 miles of streets? When I tell you that the output in a district like Bond Street or Piccadilly, in which it is difficult in the course of a walk to discover that gas is being used at all, has increased during the last twenty years by more than 20 per cent., and that in the Harley Street district more gas for domestic purposes is used per square mile than in any other part of London, you will see that our position is really a very strong one.

I was much interested recently on looking at an advertisement issued by a well-known London Hotel some thirty-five years ago, in which they indicated in bold letters that "no gas" was used on the premises. To-day that same hotel is using gas to the extent of a million cubic feet per month.

### 20 PER CENT. INCREASE IN 3 YEARS.

Since the year 1921 there has been an increase of no less than 20 per cent. in the sale of gas, an increase equal in quantity to 6,000 million cubic feet over a year, and an increase in the number of cooking stoves and fires placed out on hire and sold of over 200,000.

At last year's meeting I drew attention to the fact that the Gas Light and Coke Company alone produced approximately in a year as much energy for light, heat and power as is produced in the form of electricity by the whole of the Electrical Undertakings in Great Britain. There was a great deal of astonishment expressed at that statement, but it has never been controverted.

### A COMPARISON OF COSTS

There is another aspect of the matter to which I should like to draw attention, viz.: the revenue from the sale of gas, or to put it in another way, the cost to the consumer. For the vast quantity of heat units that were supplied by this Company during the year for all purposes, viz., 183,000,000 therms, the consumers paid just over £6,000,000. Were the electricians called upon to replace the use of this gas by electricity, it would mean that they would have to furnish a supply of over 5,000 million Board of Trade units, and if these units were to be sold at a total cost to the consumer of £6,000,000, it would be necessary for the charge per unit to be in the neighbourhood of a farthing. On referring to one of the recently published Electrical Trade Journals, the average charge for electricity for all purposes was found to be as nearly as possible 2d. per unit. Even allowing for a claim for a somewhat higher efficiency of utilisation to which the electricians might consider they were in some cases entitled, there is no justification, if any regard at all is to be had to the economics of the question, for the agitation in some quarters for the introduction of electricity for every domestic purpose.

### THE ECONOMIC SOURCE OF HEAT.

The figures I have given appear to me to make it clear that in a country where, for all practical purposes, our supplies of electricity as of gas are dependent entirely upon coal, there can be no question of electricity economically displacing gas as a source of heat in our homes and factories.

Apart from this aspect of the matter there is the question of conserving the country's resources in the way of coal, where the advantage, as has so often been pointed out, lies heavily in the direction of gas manufacture.

I do not for one moment want it thought that electricity could or should be entirely superseded by gas, because there are places in which and purposes for which electricity is eminently suitable, but I have mentioned this matter in order to show that it is wrong to think that the Country would be the gainer by displacing gas by electricity.

### "FAIR PLAY AND NO FAVOUR."

The public evidently appreciate gas or they would not use it in largely increasing quantities, and it is only right that politicians and others who are in positions of authority should know the truth. What we want is fair play and no favour. In particular, if the State is going to give financial assistance to Electricity, in common fairness the same privilege ought to be extended to gas.

I am most anxious to let the public know the real facts of the case, as there seems to be a tendency specially among politicians to boost electricity at all costs. There is a large field for both gas and electricity in which to work for efficiency and economy, the saving of labour and the cleansing of the atmosphere of our towns.

The Company joined with other Undertakings in carrying out a joint Gas Exhibit at the British Empire Exhibition. The exhibit was a great success and was visited by hundreds of thousands of people and it is interesting to know that, throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, it has led to increased business. We have, therefore, decided to exhibit again this year at Wembley and we hope to obtain equally good results.

### CO-PARTNERSHIP.

Co-partnership is working extremely well in the Company. There are now 12,543 Co-partners, holding altogether nearly £500,000 Ordinary Stock of the Company together with a large sum on deposit. During the past year our relationship with our men has been of a very pleasant character.

In these days when so much is being said about the necessity of improving the understanding between Capital and Labour, I may be pardoned, as head of one of the largest concerns working on Co-partnership lines in this

Country, if I say a few words on the subject. There would appear to be three common objections to Co-partnership from the point of view of its general adoption. First that losses are not shared as well as profits; secondly, that Co-partnership is not suited to businesses which are here to-day and gone to-morrow; and, thirdly, that small businesses would find it impossible in many cases and difficult in others, to arrange for the sharing and transfer of capital to the employees as can be done by a large Undertaking.

With regard to the first objection, it seems to me to be unreasonable and in fact impossible to expect a wage earner to assist in sharing a loss, however small.

With regard to objection two, it may be perfectly true that it does not suit ephemeral businesses, but there are thousands of companies which have been established for many years which might very well institute co-partnership at once.

There is a real difficulty in the third case. While it is extremely desirable that men should hold stock in the Company for which they are working, there is no reason why the bonuses should not be invested for them in some Government or Local Authority security, the stock being held under regulations such as are in force in the case of this Company as regards co-partnership stock.

Our method for computing the bonus each year is that a sum calculated at the same rate as the dividend paid by the Company on the Ordinary Stock is given to each Co-partner on a certain portion of his earnings. There is a basis which could be applied to any business. The small business with large labour costs could adjust the proportion of wages to be taken as hypothetical capital so as to give a fair bonus.

#### RELATIONS WITH LABOUR.

The Gas Industry has, up to now, been very fortunate in its relationship with the men working for it and I hope it will continue to be so. Not a little of the success is due to the fact that so many of the men in the Industry are Co-partners. We have a joint Industrial Council for the Industry which has worked very satisfactorily.

I regret to say, however, that there is at present a deadlock in the Industry.

The men's leaders have put in a claim for an advance of 12s. a week in wages, time and a quarter for night work and 14 days minimum holiday per annum.

The Gas Industry does not see its way to agree to any of these claims, particularly in view of the serious slump in the Residuals Market which may affect the price of gas throughout the Country. The Employers on their side claimed that the conditions of the sliding scale under which wages had been regulated should be modified. We did not propose, however, any reduction in wages at the present time.

This being the position, we offered to go to arbitration on the whole dispute. Our offer, however, was turned down by the Trade Union leaders, who would only agree to an arbitration on their own demands.

We are working under an agreement which continues until the 31st March and I hope that before then the men's leaders may see the fairness of submitting both claims and counter-claims to arbitration.

I notice that Mr. Hayday, the Trade Union leader, inferred in a statement made yesterday that the Industry should pay higher wages because the average increase in the cost of gas to the consumer was only 50 per cent. above the pre-war price, whereas the cost of living was 80 per cent. up.

I cannot, however, agree with Mr. Hayday's claim. The Gas Industry is a three-fold partnership—the workers, the consumers, and shareholders. The facts are: The Workers are already receiving from about 80 per cent. up to 120 per cent. above pre-war wages and, therefore, in their case the increased cost of living has been fully met, whereas the Consumers are paying 50 per cent. and more for their gas, and the Shareholders are in a still worse position because they are only receiving about 10 per cent. more in dividends than before the war and this leaves out of consideration the heavier Income Tax which has to be paid.

If wages went up it would mean an increase in the cost of gas and a lower dividend, because we work under a sliding scale.

Any increase in the price of gas would fall heavily upon the working classes who depend so much upon gas both for light and heat.

In addition to Co-partnership, we have contributory pension schemes in full operation which are of the greatest benefit to all Co-partners.

We also take care of the physical wants of our employees by providing Sports Grounds which give them the opportunity for healthy exercise.

#### "THE RANGERS."

I am glad to say that we have been able this year to revive the old connection which existed between the Com-

pany and the 12th Bttn. of the London Regiment, usually known as "The Rangers." It is gratifying that there has been a hearty response to the appeal that has been made in this direction.

To meet the enormous demand for the supply of gas the energies of the Staff, both officers and men, have been taxed to the utmost, both indoor and outdoor, and I am glad to say that they, as a whole, have risen to the occasion and worked splendidly. I do not think there is any Company better served than this one is in this respect.

You will be interested to see that we have been re-decorating our premises here. One of the fallacies we have to fight is that gas is old-fashioned. We have endeavoured, therefore, to show that it is not so and that it can be used with success for both lighting and heating in beautiful surroundings.

#### THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS WERE ADOPTED.

Presiding subsequently at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Proprietors of the Company, for the purpose of considering the Bill now before Parliament, the Governor (Mr. D. Milne Watson) said:

You have just had read to you the Heads of the Bill which is being laid before Parliament and the Sections which deal with the acquisition by the Company of the Undertaking of the Brentford Company will no doubt strike you as being its most important feature.

I feel sure it will be an advantage to both companies. The Gas Light and Coke Company is naturally anxious to have a free opening to greater London and the suburbs and the enlarging of our district will, I am sure, be an excellent thing for the Company and the consumers generally.

At the same time, the Brentford Company who, by the nature of their geographical position are cut off to a great extent from the advantage to be gained by possessing an easy access to the sea, will benefit by the facilities in this and other directions which the Gas Light and Coke Company can bring to them.

I beg to move that the Bill be approved, subject to such alterations as may be made in the Bill by Parliament and approved of by the Directors.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Henry Woodall and carried unanimously.

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## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

WE ARE WILLING TO SEND SUBSCRIBERS COPIES TO A TEMPORARY ADDRESS. NOTIFICATION SHOULD REACH US BY WEDNESDAY MORNING OF EACH WEEK AT LATEST.

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